
HEGEL



The Logic of Self-Consciousness
and the
Legacy of Subjective Freedom

Robert Bruce Ware

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To my parents

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*The Logic of Self-consciousness and
the Legacy of Subjective Freedom*

ROBERT BRUCE WARE

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I am deeply grateful to John Torrance,
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Introduction

This study grounds Hegel's political philosophy in his logic, and connects the latter to texts at the foundation of the analytic philosophical tradition. It argues not only that Hegel's philosophy has been fundamentally misunderstood, but that its significance could not have been fully appreciated prior to the dramatic intellectual developments that have characterized the twentieth century. It shows that by accepting Hegel's understanding of his own philosophy we are better able to understand the intellectual development that has culminated in the problems of the present age.

Received interpretations have agreed that philosophy, for Hegel, must be fundamentally conservative and retrospective. This, so they claim, is because Hegel believed that a philosophy can do no more than to grasp the essence of its age. However, the opening chapter of this study presents textual evidence challenging this traditional reading. In several key passages, Hegel states that in its comprehension of the limitations of the culture of its day, a philosophy also serves to indicate the direction of subsequent cultural developments that will occur in response to those limitations. It shows, moreover, that Hegel believed his own analysis of the preceding Western intellectual tradition had led him to a grasp of certain key contradictions at the heart of Western thought, and that his philosophy therefore heralded a new age of human self-consciousness, which would unfold as these contradictions were subsequently recognized and transcended.

In so far as Hegel's philosophy anticipates the transcendence of categories and dichotomies fundamental to Western thought, it is predictably difficult and obscure. Yet if Hegel is correct about the role of a philosophy in anticipating subsequent cultural transformation, then the intellectual developments of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries should provide clarification for his basic ideas.

Thus, a careful examination of Hegel's understanding of his own philosophy suggests a striking hermeneutic reciprocity. On the one hand, Hegel may provide a philosophical foundation for the intellectual developments of the twentieth century, while, at the same time, the latter may provide for the clarification of Hegel's philosophy.

But is this correct? Does Hegel's philosophy anticipate subsequent intellectual development, and do such developments elucidate Hegel's philosophy? The second chapter tests this thesis through an interpretation of dramatic events that occurred in the development of logic, mathematics and physical science at the turn of the twentieth century. In and around the year 1900, at the same time that Planck's investigations undermined classical physics and inaugurated quantum mechanics, Russell, Cantor and others discovered deep contradictions at the core of logic and mathematics involving classes that contain themselves as members. Issues that these antinomies raise at the foundation of logic and mathematics have remained essentially unresolved since their discovery. Instead they have been domesticated, defined away and otherwise evaded by *ad hoc* devices, such as Russell's theory of types or Zermello's axiomatised set theory, which have no logical, or necessary, connection to the antinomies that they seek to avoid.

At the same time, Hegel's dialectical approach to logic, which provides the foundation for his philosophy, has been dismissed and widely ignored, even by those interpreters who are otherwise sympathetic to his political philosophy. Commentators as diverse as Ernst Cassirer and Allen Wood have argued that developments in modern logic have left Hegel hopelessly behind, and that his moral and political insights therefore must be separated from their logical and ontological trappings. Yet many other writers (for example, Ilting, Habermas, Kolb, Pinkard, Plant, Reidel, Ritter and Stanley Rosen) have argued that Hegel cannot be understood apart from his ontology as grounded in his logic.

A number of writers (for example, John Burbidge and Peter Hylton) have commented on Hegel's relation to the analytic tradition in general, and to Russell in particular. In the opening pages of Alasdair MacIntyre's *Hegel* John Findlay attempts the following reconciliation:

A Hegel-renaissance has also been made difficult in the Anglo-Saxon world by the immense prestige of mathematical logic: since 1911 one may say that we have all lived in the noble shadow of [Russell and Whitehead's] *Principia Mathematica*. Hegel is, however, believed, chiefly by those who

have not read him, to have been grievously contumacious as against that sort of logic, and in particular against the logical law of non-contradiction, and by such contumacy to have corrupted all clear thinking at its source. It was in this connection . . . that Ryle said . . . that Hegel did not deserve study, even as error.

Findlay attempts to rescue Hegel from such criticism with the following caveat: "Hegel's dialectic corresponds to the sort of informal, non-formalisable passages of comment and discussion in a book like *Principia Mathematica*, rather than its systematic text . . ."

However, working directly with *Principia Mathematica* the following discussion shows that an Hegelian approach is capable of proposing a clear and natural solution to those same logical antinomies that provided Russell and Whitehead with much of their motivation for writing that work. It was in *Principia* that Russell proposed the theory of types, which resembles Zermello's axiomatized set theory in so far as it affords *ad hoc* procedures for avoiding the antinomies without resolving them. The subsequent discussion shows that an Hegelian approach to mathematical logic not only provides this solution, but is capable of deriving a hierarchy of types and the axioms of Zermello-Frankel set theory from the very self-containment of the same universal class that is the basis for the antinomies of Russell and Cantor. And contrary to Findlay's conciliatory qualification all of this is fully formalized in the appendix, much of which remains accessible to the non-specialized reader. The result is a set theoretic model involving corollary principles, which I characterize in terms of self-containment and reciprocal universality. These principles provide for a reinterpretation of Hegel's concept of self-consciousness, which runs throughout the subsequent interpretation of his history of philosophy, philosophy of history and political philosophy.

This second chapter plays a pivotal role in this development. It follows the argument, in the first chapter, that Hegel's analysis of the history of Western thought enabled him to grasp certain key contradictions at the core of that tradition and thereby to anticipate the general direction of subsequent intellectual developments occurring in response to those contradictions. The second chapter illustrates this argument by showing that those contradictions that were discovered around the turn of the twentieth century at the foundation of logic and mathematics can be resolved through an Hegelian approach. But is there, in fact, a reciprocity to this hermeneutic? Do the

developments of twentieth-century logic also contribute to the clarification of Hegel's philosophy?

Throughout the remainder of the discussion I argue that this is, in fact, the case. Up to this point, Hegel's dialectical approach to logic, which is the basis for his ontology, his theory of consciousness and his political theory, has served as a basis for the interpretation of contemporary developments in logic resulting in a formal model of self-containment. Throughout subsequent chapters, this model is applied to a reinterpretation and clarification of Hegel's philosophy.

More specifically, the solution to Cantor's antinomy in Chapter 2 helps to clarify Hegel's notorious views concerning the identity of the mind and the universe, and the significance of that identity for a comprehension of politics. This solution to the contradiction arising from the self-containing "set of everything" leads to a model of self-containment, applicable at once to an understanding of self-consciousness, of the universe as a whole, and of the interaction occurring between the self-conscious individual and the political order.

Both consciousness and the universe as a whole can be modelled as classes that contain themselves as members. On the one hand, if consciousness is defined as the class of objects of which I am conscious, then, since I am conscious of my consciousness, this class contains itself as a member. On the other hand, logicians commonly identify the universal class, which demonstrably contains itself as a member, with the universe considered as a whole. The application of the same model to both self-consciousness and the physical universe permits a clarification of Hegel's ontology in so far as it supports his identification of substance with self-conscious subjectivity.

Moreover, the modern state, which is characterized, for Hegel, by its containment of self-conscious, critically reflective individuals, can also be modelled as a class that contains itself as a member. On the one hand, these individuals are contained within the political order as its constitutive members. On the other hand, the collectivity is contained among the objects of each individual consciousness. And in so far as it is contained as an object of his (or her, and so throughout) consciousness, the morally reflective individual is capable of recognizing the limitations and inadequacies of the political order at any particular time. Such reflection upon the limitations of the political order by the self-conscious individual may lead to efforts to transcend those limitations, eventually stimulating the historical transformation of the state.

Thus, much as Hegel insisted, a logical model of self-containment is shown to be applicable to a unified comprehension of consciousness, the historical development of the state and the universe as a whole. It supports his contention that self-containment is the structure of time and the foundation of history, and that the universe and all of its components consequently conform to this simple structure. Hegel believed that the achievement of this insight heralds a new age of human self-consciousness and cultural advance. But his philosophy of history shows that it is an insight won through two and a half millennia of hard struggle. Because Hegel understood himself as grasping key contradictions at the core of Western thought, in such a way as to anticipate subsequent intellectual developments occurring in response to those contradictions, an appreciation of Hegel's significance within the Western tradition of thought requires a selective survey of that tradition, which follows the development of these contradictions from the origin of Greek philosophy to the present.

The third chapter examines Hegel's account of the discovery of self-consciousness by the fifth-century Greeks, and of its contribution to the fragmentation of the traditional life of the polis. Hegel maintains that the exploration of subjective freedom by Socrates and the Sophists led to the disintegration of the unreflective unity of consciousness, community and cosmos previously found in the city-state. The fourth chapter follows the proliferation of this cultural fragmentation, which Hegel understands to have occurred as an inadvertent consequence of attempts at its resolution. These attempts failed because they sought to reunite two of the above components of traditional Greek life while ignoring, or excluding, the third. Thus, for example, Plato sought to reunite the community with the cosmos (understood as absolute) by excluding individualism and subjective freedom; and Jesus hoped to reconcile the individual with the absolute while generally ignoring the temporal political order. Modern political theory has sought to reintegrate the individual and the community while progressively dismissing spiritual concerns and relegating cosmological considerations to the separate sphere of physical science.

The fifth chapter argues that a reinterpretation of Hegel's philosophies of politics and history, in terms of the model derived in the second chapter, provides a holistic foundation for the resolution of fragmentation in modern culture. This it does through its reintegration of consciousness, community and cosmos on the basis of its logical principle of self-containment. The final chapter applies these

insights to issues in contemporary political thought. The discussion pays considerable attention to the texts, and follows them most closely at those points where its reinterpretation is most extensive.

As it develops this hermeneutic reciprocity between Hegel's philosophy and contemporary intellectual developments, the structure of the discussion serves as an illustration of that principle of reciprocal universality upon which its interpretation of Hegel is based, such that the content of the discussion is, in Hegelian fashion, a reflection of its form. On the basis of the reinterpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy in Chapter 1, Hegel's logic is applied to a reinterpretation of contemporary mathematical logic. The result is a model of self-containment that is subsequently applied to a reinterpretation of Hegel's philosophy. This reinterpretation provides a theoretical framework that is applied, once again, to contemporary issues, this time in political philosophy.

In other words, once we have grasped the significance of philosophical self-consciousness in Hegel's metaphilosophy (Chapter 1) then it is clear that the logical foundation of Hegel's philosophy could not have been fully appreciated before the twentieth-century development of mathematical logic. Hence, it is necessary to reinterpret the former in terms of the latter (Chapter 2) before considering the roles of philosophical self-consciousness in Hegel's history of philosophy (Chapters 3 and 4), philosophy of history and political philosophy (Chapter 5). In accord with the hermeneutic reciprocity of this approach, this reinterpretation of Hegel's political philosophy in Chapter 5 provides a framework for the solution of contemporary theoretical problems regarding conceptions of community and self in Chapter 6. In this way, the structure of this book involves a sequential reinterpretation of Hegel's philosophy and twentieth-century intellectual developments in a manner that illustrates the principle of reciprocal universality, which I find at the heart of Hegel's logic, and which serves as the foundation not only for the historicism of his philosophical system but also for its unification of content and form.

CHAPTER 1

Hegel's Metaphilosophy and Historical Metamorphosis

Hegel is commonly understood to have required that the philosophy of history must be retrospective and therefore fundamentally conservative. Yet at the same time he is thought to have claimed that his system involved an absolute truth beyond which no philosophy could advance, and that it therefore marked the end of the history of philosophy. The two claims are evidently inconsistent, since a history of philosophy, which must be bound by constraints on the philosophy of history, could not legitimately comment on philosophy's future. If this is the result of Hegel's metaphilosophy then he has contributed at least this much to his reputation for presumption and incoherence.

However, I shall argue that both claims are based upon misinterpretations that follow from inattention to Hegel's ontology, and that his metaphilosophy is more subtle and more critical than most interpreters have allowed. Though Hegel clearly requires that a philosophy draw its content from its time, he regards it as historically transcendent in its form, and as consequently playing a crucial role in the transition to the next historical epoch. The discussion begins with Hegel's views on the role of philosophy in history and proceeds to his conception of his place in the history of philosophy.

— CHILD OF ITS TIME —

In a series of well-known passages in his preface to the *Philosophy of Right* (PR), Hegel declares that a philosophy is necessarily a product of its age.

Whatever happens, every individual is a child of his time; so philosophy too is its own time apprehended in thoughts. It is just as absurd to fancy

that a philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as it is to fancy that an individual can over-leap his own age, jump over Rhodes. If his theory really goes beyond the world as it is and builds an ideal one as it ought to be, that world exists indeed, but only in his opinions, an unsubstantial element where anything you please may, in fancy, be built.¹

Hegel's ostensibly open acknowledgement of his own philosophical limitations reflects his views on the historicity of reason. According to Hegel, the philosopher's rational faculty is a reflection of a deeper ontological reason which differs significantly from the common sense conception of the term. In contrast to ordinary notions of rationality, Hegelian reason necessarily expresses itself throughout the development of the world. It cannot be derived a priori but must evolve through time. The movement of reason can be traced retrospectively through reflection on the course of human history, but there can be no fully accurate prediction of its future.

As a consequence, the insight of any philosopher is restricted to an evaluation of his own historical epoch within the context of its antecedents, and despite the traditional aspirations of utopian thinkers, philosophy cannot provide a precise blueprint for future development. Instead, the proper task of the philosopher is to provide his generation with an adequate comprehension of itself as the product of its past.

Many commentators have examined what they have thought to be the conservative implications of this view, and have interpreted Hegel to mean that philosophy can play no part in reforming the world. This interpretation can be traced as least as far back as 1857 to Haym's influential claims that Hegel had reduced philosophy to "the scientific dwelling of the spirit of Prussian restoration"² providing "the absolute formula" for "political conservatism, quietism and optimism".³ Haym's interpretation set the tone for more than a century, and has been echoed by commentators such as Findlay and Avineri.⁴ On their view, Hegel required that philosophy must acquiesce in existing arrangements and content itself with pointing out that rationality which has already been realized in things as they stand. Hegel is thought to have meant that changes, however necessary and reasonable, can only be justified *ex post facto*. Taylor, for example, interprets Hegel as believing that

What human reason can do is only to grasp what has already been realised, to understand what reason has already achieved. But should an actual

breach in existing reality, a revolutionary transformation, be necessary for reason, and thus on the cards, philosophy could not know. It would go on expounding the rational in the current system, while revolutionaries without benefit of sound thought would launch themselves into action. Later a higher synthesis would show how both understandings were partial.⁵

Interpretations such as this have led to the common view that Hegel saw philosophy as a kind of palliative. He is said to have believed that philosophy has no business in the world apart from providing a reconciliation with the status quo, however much injustice and irrationality this might happen to involve. This quiescence is understood to follow from Hegel's belief that the history of the world had reached a culmination or final plateau wherein everything, if not entirely harmonious, was at least acceptable. Anyone sensitive to a need for radical reform would naturally find this consolation to be unsatisfactory, and that is why so many who have felt that need have rejected, or radically modified, Hegel.

Yet this interpretation is at odds with recent readings of Hegel's metaphilosophy,⁶ as well as with lecture notes on Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* compiled from 1817 to 1820 and recently brought to light by Henrich and Ilting.⁷ These notes not only suggest that Hegel was sympathetic to political rebellion,⁸ but also provide more progressive formulations of Hegel's famous dictum regarding the rational and the actual, to which Taylor alludes in the citation above.⁹ For instance, in his lectures of 1819, Hegel remarks that "what is actual becomes rational, and the rational becomes actual".¹⁰ Hegel's postulation of a dynamic reciprocity between rationality and actuality does not legitimize the status quo so much as social change. This view is underscored in the *Encyclopedia*, where he explains that his approach is "opposed" to the "fancy that Ideas and ideals are something far too excellent to have actuality, or something too impotent to procure it for themselves".¹¹

Moreover, the conservative reading of Hegel's metaphilosophy is at odds with his discussion of the role of philosophy in other passages in his preface to *PR*, as well as in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (*PH*) and his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (*HP*). In the introduction to *HP*, Hegel reiterates that the content of any philosophy is drawn from the preceding historical epoch, and that each philosophy is consequently a product of its time. Yet at the same time, each philosophy provides the critical transition that produces the new form of spiritual development characterizing the subsequent

age. By grasping the essence of the preceding epoch, such a philosophy has already differentiated itself from that epoch. Thus, while it draws its content from the preceding age, Hegel remarks that it already stands above that epoch in form.

But if Philosophy does not stand above its time in content, it does so in form, because as the thought and knowledge of that which is the substantial spirit of its time, it makes that spirit its object . . . Through knowledge, Spirit makes manifest a distinction between knowledge and that which is; this knowledge is thus what *produces* a new form of development. The new forms at first are only special modes of knowledge, and it is thus that a new Philosophy is produced: yet since it already is a wider kind of spirit, it is the inward birth-place of the spirit which will later arrive at actual form.¹²

In its self-conscious comprehension of the preceding epoch, a philosophy is thus the inward act of conception that *produces* the new form of development. This new form begins as a mode of philosophical knowledge and arrives subsequently at actual form. In an early letter to Niethammer, Hegel underscores the active role that philosophy plays in social transformation: "Daily am I more and more convinced that theoretical work achieves more in the world than practical. Once the realm of ideas is revolutionised, actuality does not hold out."¹³

Yet if philosophers play an active role in social transformation then how can it be reconciled with Hegel's statement of their limitations in his preface to *PR*? Is this a second count of inconsistency against his metaphilosophy? The difficulty appears to be confirmed by a passage at the close of the preface to *PR*:

One word about giving instructions as to what the world ought to be. Philosophy, in any case, always comes on the scene too late to give it. As the thought of the world, it appears only when actuality is already there cut and dried after its process of formation has been completed. The teaching of the concept, which is also history's inescapable lesson, is that it is only when actuality is mature that the ideal first appears over against the real and that the ideal apprehends this same real world in its substance and builds it up for itself into the shape of an intellectual realm. When philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has a shape of life grown old. By philosophy's grey in grey it cannot be rejuvenated, but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk.¹⁴

Philosophy, for Hegel, is the wisdom of historical maturity, and when an epoch finally produces a thinker to translate the essence of

its actual life into the language of ideas, then that epoch has come to a close. Philosophy can only comprehend that which is, but in doing so it signifies the infirmity of the existing mode. When expression is finally given to that which lies at the heart of an historical actuality, then a form of life has grown old, for only that which is fully developed can be philosophically comprehended. Yet in the preceding passage from *HP* Hegel adds that this self-conscious comprehension of an historical epoch is also the first step in the transition to the age which follows. In both cases Hegel's historical claims are referred to his ontology, which he regards, in the passage above, as the deeper significance, or "lesson", of history. Any interpretation of those claims must therefore consider the ontological foundation of his system.

— SELF-CONTAINMENT AND THE — STRUCTURE OF CHANGE

In the preceding citation, the "teaching of the concept" involves the differentiation of the ideal from the real, and also the apprehension and subsumption of the latter within the former. How is the real both differentiated from and subsumed within the ideal?

For Hegel, a concept is not initially derived through a process of abstraction from a number of pre-existing particulars, but rather begins as a self-determining universal which is expressed, or manifested, throughout a multiplicity of particular events and experiences.¹⁵ The Hegelian concept, in other words, is active in determining its content. In various contexts this active self-determination is described by Hegel as the "form of the Idea" and as the "movement of the concept". It is comparable to a movement since it often involves a sequence of expressions occurring as "moments" within a temporal process. In so far as it is determinate, each of these expressions is limited and is thus an incomplete expression of the concept. Red, for example, is a partial and incomplete manifestation of the concept of colour, since it can be determinately red only in so far as it excludes other colours. Similarly, the French Revolution is a moment in the concept of France. It is because each of its separate expressions is partial and inadequate that the concept must be expressed throughout a multiplicity, or a sequence, of particular determinations.¹⁶ The manifestation of that which is implicit in the concept is the basis for any sort of historical process. In Hegel's words "The movement of the Concept

is *development*: by which that only is explicit which is already implicitly present.”¹⁷

According to Hegel, the concept is realized in each of its expressions. In so far as each part refers on beyond itself to the whole, the whole is implicit in every part, and every part encompasses the whole.¹⁸ Hegel goes so far as to say that the concept is “contained” within each of its particular manifestations.¹⁹ Since any particular colour is experienced only in so far as it contrasts with other colours, there is a sense in which my experience of any colour contains all the colours that I have experienced. Similarly, all of French history may be understood to be implicit within the French Revolution. In some sense, any historical event contains all of those events that caused it, along with all of those other events to which it gives rise. According to Hegel, the form of the Idea is the method, or structure, of self-containment, by which the universal totality is contained within each of its component parts, such that every part is an expression of the whole.²⁰

A similar feature of self-containment characterizes Hegel’s definition of the concept. In his words, “The concept . . . is a systematic whole, in which each of its constituent functions is the very total which the concept is, and is put as indissolubly one with it.”²¹ Since the whole is contained in each of its parts, the self-containment of the Idea is expressed in a principle of reciprocity whereby the whole which contains the parts is itself contained as a part within each of the parts that it contains. It is through this principle of self-containment and reciprocity that Hegel seeks to avoid the infinite progression of Fichtean philosophy.

In Reciprocity . . . the rectilinear movement out from causes to effects, and from effects to causes, is bent round and back into itself, and thus the progress *ad infinitum* of causes and effects is, as a progress, really and truly suspended. This bend . . . transforms the infinite progression into a self-contained relationship . . .²²

Yet while the whole is implicit within each of its parts it cannot be overtly and entirely expressed in a single manifestation. Hence, the concept is impelled through a multiplicity of determinations. Because it is a combination of these mutually exclusive elements the concept may be regarded as inherently self-contradictory, and as consequently driven to express itself throughout manifold of particular expressions. The Hegelian universal is “self-negating” and negates or limits

itself in each of its particular determinations. It limits itself as it differentiates itself into particulars, each of which is limited in so far as it is exclusive of the others.

In Hegel's words, the movement of the concept begins with a stage of "immediate unity" or undifferentiated universality, which negates, or differentiates, itself as an "other" of itself.²³ Yet whereas this movement begins with an "immediate", undifferentiated or abstract universality and passes through a stage of differentiation, it returns to a mediated or concrete universality, which incorporates those particular distinctions of the intermediate stage.²⁴ The actualization of those potentials implicit in the opening phase of the concept depends upon this return from particularity to concrete universality, which Hegel also describes as individuality.²⁵ Yet this return to concrete universality marks the beginning of a new phase of differentiation at the next stage of development. The concrete universality that results from the preceding stage is the abstract universality that determines itself in the next phase. "Its return to itself", says Hegel, is also the "division of itself."²⁶ Still, he intends to avoid Fichtean difficulties in so far as the Idea is implicit in each of its determinations, and eternity is the pulse of the present. In Hegel's words, "The Idea itself is the dialectic which forever divides and distinguishes the self-identical from the differentiated, the subjective from the objective, the finite from the infinite . . . Only on these terms is it an eternal creation, eternal vitality, and eternal spirit."²⁷

— THE SPIRITUAL MIDWIFE: PHILOSOPHY'S ACTIVE ROLE —

Hegel's conception of concrete universality is applicable to a broad range of entities. It is illustrated, for example, whenever an individual observer reflects upon his experience and compares its particular components in order to abstract their universal features. In this respect, the actualization of the concept is closely connected with self-consciousness.

In an historical context, the concept corresponds to the spirit (*Geist*), or collective self-conception, of individuals in an historical epoch. It includes their values, ideals and aspirations within a general vision, or view of the world, which is expressed and realized in the activities that it inspires. Concrete universality eventually is achieved in a philosophical comprehension of this vision which also serves to indicate its inherent limitations.

I shall argue that Hegel understands the demarcation of an epoch to require (1) that the concept of an epoch should have been sufficiently articulated to allow for its philosophical comprehension; and (2) that this comprehension should provide at least an implicit indication of its inherent limitations. Thus an epoch is demarcated in so far as the limitations inherent in its concept have been developed to the level of philosophical expression. I understand Hegel to mean that the presence of philosophy is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for the comprehension and demarcation of an historical epoch. Not every philosophy defines an epoch, but no epoch can be defined without a philosophical comprehension of its concept. Hegel's illustrations include Plato,²⁸ whose political philosophy implicitly underscored the limitations of the polis, and Luther, whose foundation of Protestantism followed his publication of contradictions in sixteenth-century Catholicism.²⁹

In the preceding passage from *PR*, the appearance of the ideal over against the real refers to a stage of differentiation and division that occurs in the development of the concept of an historical epoch. This contrast is not apparent to inhabitants of that age while they are struggling to realize their goals and to fulfil their vision of the world. During this time all their efforts are devoted to their struggle and they do not have the distance or perspective on themselves required for self-consciousness. Contradictions are not taken seriously because they have not yet proved fatal. It is assumed that they will find their solution within the vision of this epoch.

But as that vision is actualized, its contradictions are also developed. They mature along with it and become most prominent at the moment of its greatest success. This is what Hegel describes as the differentiation of the concept, since the latter has been realized through its expression in a diversity of particular events. At this point in the process, the concept is no longer an abstract ideal. Because it has now been realized in the world, its realization can now be distinguished from, and contrasted with, its previously visionary form. Hence, its inner imperfections and contradictions now become apparent.

Through the realization of these inherent limitations we achieve the perspective that is required for self-consciousness. By looking hard at what we have actually become we are distanced from our ideals and, for the first time, enabled to understand them fully. Prior to their actualization, these ideals corresponded with Hegel's notion of abstract universality, but in the course of their realization, they are

differentiated and determined in such a way that we are able to recognize their limitations and to see them in their particularity.

At the same time, we are able to distance ourselves from our present reality by comparing it with our ideals. In recognizing the contradictions that exist between our ideals and our real situation, we overcome our myopia and fully understand that reality for the first time. We recognize what we have really accomplished only through the insufficiencies that separate it from what we had hoped to accomplish.

In accord with Hegel's doctrine of the concept, both aspects of this limitation are inevitable. The concept (universal or ideal) comes to be limited because it is self-negating and self-determining, and the limitations of these determinations follow from their particularity. Hence, we eventually recognize defects in the original vision as well as in its realization. Our philosophical task is the elevation of these limitations to consciousness.

It is only through the development of these difficulties that we finally become aware of the contrast between the ideal and the real. This seems to be what Hegel means, in the passage from *PR*, when he says that the ideal "appears over against the real". The "ideal" refers to the preceding form of abstract universality which has undergone differentiation in the course of its realization, and now appears as a limited particular.

But in the same sentence, Hegel also uses the term "ideal" to refer to the new form of concrete universality that is achieved when these particulars are reunited in the philosophical assessment of the preceding epoch. This occurs when "the ideal apprehends this same real world in its substance and builds it up for itself into the shape of an intellectual realm." In accord with Hegel's ontology, this philosophical comprehension is the concrete universality that eventually provides the concept for the next stage of development, and contributes to the derivation of its values and ideals. This is evidently what Hegel means when he writes, in the preceding passage from *HP*, that "this knowledge is thus what produces a new form of development".

When considered in light of Hegel's doctrine of the concept, there is no inconsistency between the active role that is assigned to philosophy in *HP* and the limitations that are described in *PR*. Because philosophical self-consciousness is the product of contradictions in an existing mode of life, it cannot erase those contradictions and rejuvenate a dying culture. But it can, and necessarily does, lead to the birth of a new form. Within the process of this birth, philosophy

is – to adopt a metaphor employed by an ancient associate of Minerva’s owl – a kind of spiritual “midwife”. Since we achieve this self-consciousness only in the movement from one stage of development to the next, the comprehension of the ageing epoch is an important part in the transition to that which follows. The philosophical task of bringing these difficulties to the surface is the first step in the process of resolving and transcending them, which will be the task of the epoch that eventually follows. Philosophy’s active role in heralding this new phase is emphasized by Hegel in *PH*.

In its active operations, the national spirit at first knows only the ends of its determinate reality, but not its own nature. But it is nevertheless endowed with an impulse to formulate its thoughts. Its supreme activity is thought, so that when it reaches the height of its powers, its aim is to comprehend itself. The ultimate aim of the spirit is to know itself, and to comprehend itself not merely intuitively but also in terms of thought. It must and will succeed in its task; but this very success is also its downfall, and this in turn heralds the emergence of a new phase and a new spirit.³⁰

Self-consciousness with regard to one stage is achieved in the transition to the next. Knowledge plays an important role in this process since it is the source from which a higher form emerges, while the preceding spiritual form is both preserved and transformed within it. This point is made with greater force a few pages later when Hegel describes the dialectical development of spirit.

Its movement and progression do not repeat themselves, for the changing aspect of the spirit as it passes through endlessly varying forms is essentially progress. This progress is evident even when the national spirit destroys itself by the negativity of its thought, because its knowledge, its thinking apprehension of being is the source and matrix from which a new form and indeed a higher form, whose figure both conserves and transfigures it – emerges.³¹

In so far as it indicates the limitations inherent in the preceding world view, philosophical self-consciousness provides the motivation for the development of a new vision. The full articulation of the subsequent vision will be the task of the age that follows; it is not the task of the philosopher. Since the primary role of philosophy is to grasp the concept of the preceding age, a utopian philosophy is tantamount to a contradiction in terms; to the extent that it is utopian it is not philosophy but fiction.

Yet in grasping the spirit of his age, the philosopher *implicitly* indicates the essential nature of the limitations that are the cause, at once, of its decline and of its transition to the next. If it truly succeeds in comprehending the essence of its own time, a philosophy will thereby succeed in pointing beyond itself to the origins of the age which follows. It will not offer a utopian blueprint but, for the careful reader, it will provide an indication as to the general direction of future development.

The achievement of philosophical self-consciousness cannot rejuvenate the old actuality, but it can signal the direction which the new actuality must take. In grasping the fullest truth of the preceding epoch together with its inherent limitations, philosophy points to the work which must be accomplished in the next. It is these problems with which the subsequent vision must grapple, and the philosophical view resulting from the contradictions of the earlier epoch will tend to retain its prominence for as long as it takes this new view to form. As a candidate world view begins to take shape, its recognition will depend on its capacity to encompass and propose solutions to this same set of problems.

– DAYBREAK AND DUSK –

The conventional view of Hegel's conception of the role of philosophy derives largely from passages in the preface to *PR* wherein philosophy appears to be restricted to passivity and conservatism. This view is evidently inapplicable to passages in *HP* and *PH* that assign philosophy a more critical role. I have sought to show that the relevant passages in *HP* and *PH* can be reconciled with those in *PR* through a reinterpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy that is founded upon his ontology. This reinterpretation finds support in other passages of *PR*. For example, at the end of that work, Hegel remarks that

The history of mind (*Geist*) is its own act. Mind is only what it does, and its act is to make itself the object of its own consciousness. In history its act is to gain consciousness of itself as mind, to apprehend itself in its interpretation of itself to itself. This apprehension is its being and its principle, and the completion of apprehension at one stage is *at the same time the rejection of that stage and its transition to a higher stage*. To use abstract phraseology, the mind apprehending this apprehension anew, or in other words, returning to itself again out of its rejection of this lower stage of

apprehension, is the mind of the stage higher than that on which it stood in its earlier apprehension.³²

The transition to the higher form of ethical life begins when the preceding set of institutions and laws is particularized in relation to philosophical self-consciousness. This occurs when the philosophical observer recognizes the limitations and contradictions inherent in the preceding form: "Such thinking does not remain stationary at the given, whether the given be upheld by the external positive authority of the state or the *consensus homonym* . . . [only] The unphilosophical heart takes the simple line of adhering with trustful conviction to what is publicly accepted as true . . ."³³

Philosophy must penetrate beyond what is merely positive whether this be established political institutions or the doctrine of the church, to the underlying rationale and to the negativity or dynamic tension existing in the interrelation of the established forms. Because actuality is considered to be rational, philosophy must work beyond the mere fact of existence to the reason which underlies it. It may be the case that the truth of this inner rationale is considerably different from what it appears to be to the uncritical mind. Its philosophical revelation may then lead to the recognition of contradictions in existing arrangements, and to the changes that this recognition may eventually necessitate. But because philosophy has reason for its object, it must find these interconnections in reality and not in abstract, or utopian, thought. In observing that the world is thus accessible to our knowledge, Hegel is not saying that it is rational in any static, a priori sense, which would connote finality and quietism. Its rationality is rather historical, continuously evolving, and by exposing the underlying rationale, and the limitations inherent in a given historical period, philosophy participates in its continuing evolution. For Hegel, self-consciousness is not so much a condition as a dialectical process. Nothing is ever fully comprehended without being thereby transcended. We can never fully understand something without at the same time moving beyond it.

This point is illustrated, again in the preface to *PR*, through a discussion of Plato's philosophy. In his *Republic*, Plato is said to have captured the essence of the Greek polis and raised to an ideal level the institutions and manners that characterized actual Greek life. Though the *Republic* was not modelled after any single city, and while it criticized most existing city-states, it nevertheless represented a distillation of the basic ideals of the polis. Hegel remarks that

“even Plato’s *Republic* which passes proverbially as an empty ideal is in essence nothing but an interpretation of the nature of Greek ethical life”.³⁴ This ideal encapsulation of the polis was, however, a mark of its decline since Plato could not have achieved his insight until this form of life had fully run its course. And in accord with Hegel’s ontology, the obituary of the preceding epoch is a prologue for that which follows. Thus in finally comprehending the essence of the polis, Plato was already standing outside it. Hegel’s words bear close attention, for they are indicative of his view that Plato comprehended the underlying contradictions of his age: “Plato was conscious that there was breaking into his own life in that time a deeper principle which could appear in it directly only as a longing still unsatisfied, and so only as something corrupting.”³⁵

This was the principle of subjective freedom which would be developed throughout the Christian era. The immanent world revolution would require a change in human self-conception springing from Christian revelation and centring on the Christian doctrine of conscience. According to this doctrine moral worth would depend not simply on compliance with the law (since that would be merely Pharisaical) but on the conscientious acceptance of the law, along with the ensuing demand that the law must be a fulfilment of self-conscious conviction. From this point on, the law would no longer have the immediate objectivity (and timeless authority) which it enjoyed in the polis, but would instead be mediated through the subjective will.

This subjective longing was first expressed in the teachings of the Sophists, and it is underscored in the *Republic* in so far as Plato strives to suppress it. Through the severity of his attempt to restrict subjective freedom, Plato illuminated that principle as the challenge that fatally exceeded the capacity of the established order, and hence as the contradiction that was implicit within it from the start. The unreflective parochialism of the city-state was incapable of incorporating the universalism of the rational self-consciousness to which it gave rise. Beyond the limited effort of Socrates, Plato was the first to recognize that the difficulty lay in the rise of this subjectivism and its reconciliation with the traditional objective order. By means of its focus on this fundamental difficulty, Plato’s philosophy thus provides an implicit indication of the cultural development that would occur subsequently in response to the problem. In Hegel’s words:

This movement of the individual, this principle of subjective freedom, is sometimes ignored by Plato, and sometimes even intentionally disparaged, because it proved itself to be what had wrought the ruin of Greece; and he considers only how the state may best be organised, and not subjective individuality. In passing beyond the principle of Greek morality, which in its substantial liberty cannot brook the rise of subjective liberty, the *Platonic philosophy at once grasps the above principle, and in so doing proceeds still farther.*³⁶

Throughout the form and method of Plato's work, Hegel is consequently able to locate certain basic information about the nature of subjectivity which would be fully revealed only through the subsequent course of world development. Private property, for example, was forbidden to Plato's ruling class. Hegel links this abolition of property to Plato's restriction of subjective freedom, thereby deriving an important insight as to the nature of this connection, a connection which would subsequently rise to new prominence, both in the development of social thought and in the formulation of Hegel's own political philosophy. It is through his possessions that an individual is able to express and realize himself,³⁷ and in his attempt to restrict subjectivism, this is the difficulty that property presented for Plato. "Personal property", says Hegel, "is a possession which belongs to me as a certain person, and in which my person as such comes into existence, into reality; on this ground Plato excludes it."³⁸

Hegel argues that Plato's *Republic* was a final effort at shoring up an ethos based on substantive, or objective, freedom. As a student of Socrates, Plato was aware of the failure of that ethos to meet the standards of subjective rationality; yet he could accommodate those demands only by means of a reason that served as a substantive principle informing every aspect of the political community. Hegel argues that this one-sided focus on objective freedom was the essential limitation of ancient rationality, a limitation that was revealed by Plato in so far as he could accept the rule of reason only in the form of the philosopher king. Plato could introduce reason into his state only by denying the exercise of subjective reason and freedom to all but the ruler. Yet while the polis was doomed by the contradiction of objective and subjective freedom, Plato was not completely aware of its ramifications. Instead, his efforts in the *Republic* reveal that contradiction most clearly for later readers, thereby lending that contradiction its rationally most comprehensible form.

Hegel remarks that Plato might have resolved the contradiction of

the polis if he had been able to incorporate these claims in a new vision of Greek life: "To combat, he needs must have sought aid from that very longing itself."³⁹ But this would be the work of the next two millennia, and would encompass Hegel's own philosophy. In Hegel's view, Plato's philosophy successfully identified key limitations in the society of his day, an achievement of self-consciousness that was the first step in a long process of political transformation occurring in response to those limitations. The entire scope of this project was thus beyond Plato; yet Plato's analysis pointed, by way of its very opposition, to the significance of this new principle.

But this aid had to come from on high and all that Plato could do was to seek it in the first place in a particular external form of that same Greek ethical life . . . still his genius is proved by the fact that the principle on which the distinctive character of his state turns is precisely the pivot on which the impending world revolution turned at that time.⁴⁰

The significance of this is seen in the influence that Platonism had in shaping Christian doctrine, and the lingering role that it played in the development of the Christian world for the next 1,500 years. Throughout this passage in his preface to PR, Hegel understands Plato to have grasped the essence of his age in such a way as to underscore its limitations, and to thereby have provided the first vague anticipation of the age that would follow.⁴¹ Thus there is a critical message hidden within Hegel's seemingly quietistic view of the relation of philosophy to actuality. The owl of Minerva may well spread its wings with the falling of the dusk, but it alights again at dawn, and those great leaps between each historical era are just as surely initiated through this reflective flight of the intellect. This interpretation derives support from Hegel's choice of *Dämmerung*, which means both "dusk" and "daybreak".

— METAMORPHOSED BY MIND: —
— THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY —

Pointing out that, "this passage is not Hegel's appendix to Plato, but his preface to his own political philosophy", Avineri speculates about the implications of this position for Hegel's own intellectual efforts.⁴² He observes that Hegel's ability to comprehend his own world would seem to point to its possible demise. We have seen how Hegel would have us understand the relation of his philosophical predecessors to

the process of social development, but what is the role of his own philosophy?

It is commonly thought that Hegel saw his own philosophical system as the necessary culmination of all preceding philosophy, and that he believed himself to have attained an absolute truth beyond which philosophy could not proceed. However, a careful examination of *HP* shows that while this account of Hegel's self-assessment is partially correct, the conclusions drawn from it are often mistaken. Hegel did believe that his own philosophical system was the culmination of all preceding philosophy, and he did believe that he had grasped an absolute truth. But I shall argue that he did not see his work as a termination of all philosophical thought, nor did he doubt that the history of philosophy would continue to advance and develop itself in the same way that it had previously developed.

Hegel begins his introduction to *HP* by admonishing that we must not regard the history of philosophy "as dealing with the past".⁴³ The history of philosophy, he argues, is concerned with that which is present now and which is always present. In a similar way, "we are what we are through history",⁴⁴ and so that history is present in the form of our own activity. It is the "activity of free thought"⁴⁵ that produces this transformation through history, and which survives, in our own endeavours, precisely through the transformation that it continues to receive. Each succeeding generation has the task of continuing the work of this historical transformation, and there is no end to the process:

This activity presupposes a material already present, on which it acts, and which it does not merely augment by the addition of new matter, but completely fashions and transforms . . . To receive this inheritance is also to enter upon its use . . . this legacy is degraded to a material which becomes metamorphosed by Mind. In this manner that which is received is changed, and the material worked upon is both enriched and preserved at the same time . . . This is the function of our own and every age: to grasp the knowledge which is already existing, to make it our own, and in so doing to develop it still further and to raise it to a higher level. In thus appropriating it we make it into something different from what it was before.⁴⁶

Within this process of transformation, each succeeding world view is undermined and subsumed, and a truly self-conscious philosopher will have no illusions about the inevitability of this supersession. Hence Hegel's exhortation to all philosophers, present and future:

“Behold the philosophy by which thine own will be refuted and displaced shall not tarry long as it has not tarried before.”⁴⁷

Throughout its long history, this process has resulted in a great diversity of world views, but this diversity culminates neither in scepticism nor in an impotent relativism. It is not a merely random diversity, or a confused array of disconnected parts. Rather its multiplicity is “absolutely necessary to the existence of a science of philosophy.”⁴⁸ We should not see the elements of this philosophical manifold as randomly opposed and merely exclusive of one another, but rather as systematically producing one another, and as leading to each other through the very process of their sequential opposition and transcendence. It is only because divergent philosophies address and actively transform one another that the history of philosophy may be considered as a process of development. Hegel insists that “those who believe the principle of diversity to be one absolutely fixed [static], do not know its nature or its dialectic; the manifold or diverse is in a state of flux; it must really be conceived of as in the process of development, and as but a passing moment”.⁴⁹ Indeed, it becomes impossible to separate the notion of philosophy from this continuous process of its own transformation. “Thus”, says Hegel, “we see that philosophy is system in development.”⁵⁰

In accord with the reciprocity inherent in the form of the Idea, this development is, at once, the history of philosophy and the history of civilization. Philosophers require the articulation and actualization of the concept in historical events, and social actors require philosophical insight into the limitations in existing arrangements. Hegel’s metaphilosophy coincides with his views on the “cunning of reason” in so far as such actors may lack a clear and complete prognosis for the new world to which their actions contribute, but yet possess a sense of the contradictions and limitations inherent in existing arrangements, along with a general notion of what their transcendence will require. Whether or not they are philosophers themselves,⁵¹ these actors eventually must respond to the same contradictions that are the focus of philosophy.

In each of its stages, this process is expressed as the spirit of a particular age. This spirit is realized through the deeds, ideas, institutions and culture of that epoch, and is finally comprehended within a philosophical viewpoint characteristic of that period. Hegel compares the stages of this process to a “chain of spiritual development”⁵² in which each philosophical view provides a connection between the preceding age, whose essence it comprehends, and the succeeding era,

which it anticipates and ushers in as it elevates the limitations of the preceding epoch to consciousness. Hence, none of these stages can be taken independently, for they are all moments cohering within this single continuing process. Each stage is born as the expression of a particular facet of the Idea, and dies in the process of passing on to the next.

Yet, as all of these forms spring from the unity of the Idea, so are they ultimately returned to this unitary ideality through our self-conscious comprehension of their interconnection. After the Idea has expressed itself in a number of these stages, it becomes possible for philosophers to examine the history of their transition, and to grasp philosophically the method or the structure which underlies their continuing development. And since all of these stages are expressions of the Idea, in coming to understand the underlying method of their development, we come to understand the Idea itself. That is, we come to understand the method of the process which underlies their transformation. The various stages of this development are returned to ideality (namely, concrete unity) when they are no longer perceived as merely random or diverse, but are comprehended within the focused unity of the philosopher's self-consciousness, as expressions of a single underlying movement – when they are comprehended as successive manifestations of the Idea. Hegel explains that

these forms are nothing else than the original distinctions in the Idea itself, which is what it is only in them. They are in this way essential to, and constitute the content of the Idea, which in thus sundering itself, attains to form . . . They are the determinations of the original Idea, which together constitute the whole, but as being outside one another, their union does not take place in them, but in us, the observers. Each system is determined as one, but it is not a permanent condition that the differences are thus mutually exclusive. The inevitable fate of these determinations must follow, and that is that they shall be drawn together and reduced to elements or moments. The independent attitude taken up by each moment is again laid aside. After expansion, contraction follows – the unity out of which they first emerged. This third may itself be but the beginning of a further development.⁵³

The development of the Idea follows the movement of the concept. This movement begins from the unity of the abstract Idea and passes through a stage of particularization, which Hegel describes as the Idea “sundering itself”. This stage of differentiation may correspond to the contradictions developing in a culture as it approaches maturity,

but since these parts are “determinations of the original Idea”, they implicitly retain “the unity out of which they first emerged”. This underlying unity reappears once again in the self-conscious comprehension of the method of their interconnection which is achieved by the philosophical “observer”. By carefully examining all of the forms which emerge in the history of philosophy, such an observer is finally able to understand the process through which they develop, and which provides for the birth and death of each. In understanding this process through which they develop, he comprehends their underlying unity, and through this achievement of self-consciousness, the philosophical observer may be said to return these divergent forms to their unity, or ideality, in the unity of individual cognition. This is no longer the immediate unity from which the development began, but rather a concrete self-conscious unity that incorporates the diverse stages of the development.

Now Hegel believed that through a careful analysis of all preceding philosophy, he (and all who understood him) had achieved this self-conscious ideality. Does this achievement mean that the process of development will necessarily come to an end? Clearly it does not, for as we see in the passage above, this stage is “but the beginning of a further development”. Nor does Hegel reconsider this view at the end of *HP*, for there we are assured that: “It goes ever on and on, because spirit is progress alone.”⁵⁴ This progress is not only expressed through its diversity, but is also propelled and further developed through the contradictions and antagonisms existing between these different forms. Hegel reminds us that because the process is “inwardly opposed to itself it is inwardly working forever forward”.⁵⁵

It is this methodical continuity of historical development that is eventually discovered by philosophical self-consciousness, a discovery in which it comprehends the method of its own progression from one historical epoch to another, and thereby achieves consciousness of itself as this process of historical development. With this realization, philosophy becomes truly self-conscious. All previous forms of philosophy represented particular forms of self-consciousness. Each successive historical epoch, each national spirit, gave rise to its own form of philosophy which represented its conscious comprehension of itself in terms of its innermost essence. However, after a sufficient number of these periods have transpired, it becomes possible to understand the process which underlies the development of them all. When the philosopher self-consciously grasps the dialectical

method that provides the underlying continuity of the history of philosophy, then philosophy is no longer limited to a particular object of reflection, such as the ethos of Greece or the spirit of the Enlightenment, but is rather conscious of itself as this universal historical process which runs throughout the rise and fall of all historical epochs. When philosophy, as in the case of Hegel's metaphilosophy, comes to understand itself, not in the form of any particular philosophy, and not in the form of a merely static, or disconnected, diversity of opposing philosophies, but rather as this active process of its own development, then philosophy achieves self-consciousness. In Hegel's words, "Philosophy has now become for itself the apprehension of this development . . . in Thought."⁵⁶ Thus, Hegel's philosophy itself expresses the self-containment of the Idea in that it is, on the one hand, a particular component of the history of philosophy, while on the other hand, it comprehends that same history and distills the method of its development.

This self-consciousness of the historical development of self-consciousness is described by Hegel as absolute or philosophical self-consciousness. It is the knowledge of philosophy that is achieved in the form of the Hegelian system; yet the achievement of this absolute self-consciousness evidently does not mean that this process of historical development comes to an end. Absolute self-consciousness, I shall argue, is not a terminal truth we achieve at the end of the process so much as a knowledge of the method according to which the process will continue. On this view, Hegelian philosophy does not mark the point at which the process stops, but the point from which it proceeds self-consciously. It marks the point at which philosophical consciousness becomes conscious of itself, not as any one of its particular forms but rather as the universal process of its own development.

Preceding philosophies have provided for the transition between particular historical periods; yet all of these transitions have occurred within a specific tradition.⁵⁷ In its comprehension of the underlying method of this process, Hegelian philosophy becomes a component within a transition of a different magnitude. The comprehension of the tradition as a whole implies a transcendence of the entire tradition of thought, together with its characteristic categories and problem sets. This would suggest a correlation between the role that Hegel assigns to philosophy in later works, such as *HP*, *PH* and *PR*, and his understanding of the significance of his own philosophy in his earlier works.

Many commentators have regarded Hegel as undergoing a personal transformation from youthful idealism and utopian dreams to a conservative pessimism. On one account, the young Hegel, who was “brought up on the republican theorising of Montesquieu and Rousseau”, and who found in the French Revolution “an attempt to recreate conditions of polis democracy”, was frustrated by the Revolution’s failure to recover an earlier form of ethical harmony and “was led to a more subtle appreciation of the opportunities afforded by modernity”.⁵⁸ According to another commentator, Hegel gradually relinquished his early passion for political freedom and sought spiritual fulfilment in speculative knowledge instead of human community.⁵⁹ On still another view, Hegel’s zealously transformative “philosophy of youth” settled into a politically pragmatic “philosophy of manhood” before finally sinking into “a philosophy of old age” that “detaches itself from opposition to particular objects or persons and withdraws into a harmonious relation to the universal precepts distilled from past experience of opposition.”⁶⁰

Yet, on the strength of his analysis of Hegel’s recently published lectures on the *Rechtsphilosophie*, Tunick concludes that this view is “mistaken” and doubts that there “is any difference between the political philosophies of the early and late Hegel”.⁶¹ Similarly, Ritter maintains that: “The youthful enthusiasm for the Revolution, which stands at the beginning of the philosophical path in Hegel’s case, enters into his philosophy itself and continues on alive in its mature cast. His philosophy remains in the true sense a philosophy of revolution in that it proceeds from it and draws life from it till the last.”⁶² Ritter’s interpretation is consistent with Hegel’s view of philosophy as grasping the rational essence of its age and as thereby anticipating subsequent developments.⁶³ Similarly, Brod observes that the original title of PR is *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse* (Outline of the Philosophy of Right or Natural Law and Political Science in Outline). He suggests that

Standing near the beginning of the first fully rational, self-conscious political period in history, it is only the basic principles, the outlines, of the universal rational state that are visible. The details of that outline have yet to be developed historically. Hegel’s political philosophy, then, fills in this outline as well and fully as possible, given the material historically at hand. This is not a departure from Hegel’s philosophical methodology, because

his political rationalism is committed to the proposition that there is material at hand in the present historical epoch to rationally fill out this basic framework – that there is a rose in the cross of the present. At the same time, although the basic outline must hold good for all time, there is nothing to preclude the possibility that future developments will provide better institutional instantiations for these basic conceptions than those recommended in the *Philosophy of Right*.⁶⁴

If Brod is correct then Hegel's understanding of his own political philosophy is not only compatible with his assessment of Plato's, but is consistent with his metaphilosophy as a whole. Interpretations of the political philosophies of Plato and Hegel traditionally have presented similar enigmas. Are they fundamentally conservative enterprises supporting the status quo; are they quasi-apologetic rationalizations of existing arrangements; or are they concerned with ideal states? On the present view, Hegel understood his own political philosophy much as he understood Plato's, as grasping the rational essence of the political institutions of his age and as thereby providing an anticipation of subsequent political development. Hence, it is not philosophical self-consciousness so much as metaphilosophical self-consciousness that distinguishes Hegel from Plato. Hegel is aware that this is what he is doing.

This view is consistent with the preceding interpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy drawn from *HP*, *PH*, *PR* and supported by his logic. These works reflect Hegel's mature views; yet their conception of philosophy as providing an anticipation of subsequent cultural development is compatible with the programmatic depictions of his own philosophical project that are found in his early works. In his preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, for example, Hegel remarks that

it is not difficult to see that ours is a birth-time and a period of transition to a new era. Spirit has broken with the world it has hitherto inhabited and imagined, and is of a mind to submerge it in the past, and in the labour of its own transfiguration. Spirit is indeed never at rest but always engaged in moving forward.⁶⁵

Hegel understood his philosophy as grasping the essence of its tradition, and as thereby indicating the emergence of a new age of self-conscious human existence. He regarded his philosophy not as the termination, but as the threshold, of this new age, and the beginning of its further development. In his own time, he explains,

This new world is no more a complete actuality than is a new-born child; it is essential to bear this in mind. It comes on the scene for the first time in its immediacy or its concept. Just as little as a building is finished when its foundation has been laid, so little is the achieved concept of the whole the whole itself . . . So too, science, the crown of a world spirit is not complete in its beginnings. The onset of the new spirit is the product of a widespread upheaval in various forms of culture . . . but the actuality of this simple whole consists in those various shapes and forms which have become its moments, and which will now develop and take afresh, this time in their new element, in their newly acquired meaning.⁶⁶

This new world view, still hazy and embryonic in Hegel's historical analysis, is purportedly a world view which embraces the development of all world views in so far as it describes the methodical progression from each paradigm to the next. It is a view of reality as a process of rational development together with the first vague insights as to the specific dynamism and structure of that process. This is the principle of self-containment which is central to Hegel's philosophy and its message to the age which follows. However incipient and obscure, it is the heart of Hegel's thought, just as subjective freedom was the implicit focus of Plato's. And if it is often obscure, then perhaps criticism should be measured in terms of Hegel's satisfaction of his own metaphilosophical standard. Through his analysis of the preceding tradition he has sought to point the way toward the development of a new *Weltanschauung*. According to Hegel, it is the task of a philosophy to provide only this general indication, and not to furnish a precise and explicit blueprint for future development. Referring to his own philosophy, he admits that "the initial appearance of the new world is, to begin with only the whole veiled in its *simplicity* or the foundation of the whole".⁶⁷

In the final speech of his 1806 lectures at Jena, at the time that he was writing his first mature work, Hegel remarks that his generation stands at the threshold of a new age of spiritual development. It is an historical transition marked by the collapse of all those categories and presuppositions that characterize the tradition of Western thought, and while "others" cling to the past, it is a transition which first must be heralded by philosophy.

We stand at the gates of an important epoch, a time of ferment, when spirit has gone beyond its previous concrete form and acquired a new one. The whole mass of ideas and concepts that have been current until now, the very bonds of the world, are dissolving and collapsing like a vision in a

dream. A new phase of spirit is at hand; philosophy must be the first to hail its appearance and recognise it, while others, who oppose it impotently, cling to the past.⁶⁸

– NOTES –

1. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 11.
2. Haym, *Vorlesung uber Hegel und seine Zeit*, p. 359.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
4. See Avineri, pp. 99, 234–8; R. Berki, “Perspectives in the Marxian critique of Hegel’s political philosophy”, in Pelczynski, ed., *Hegel’s Political Philosophy: problems and perspectives*, p. 200; Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-examination*, p. 345; G. Heiman, “The source and significance of Hegel’s corporate doctrine”, in Pelczynski, pp. 111–12; Smith, *Hegel’s Critique of Liberalism: Rights in Context*, pp. 222–3; D. P. Verne, “Hegel’s account of war”, in Pelczynski, p. 170.
5. Charles Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 425.
6. See Brod, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Politics*; Houlgate, *Freedom, Truth and History*; Ritter, *Hegel and the French Revolution*; Tunick, *Hegel’s Political Philosophy*; Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought*.
7. Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts: Die Vorlesung von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift*, Henrich ed.; Hegel, *Vorlesungen uber Rechtsphilosophie (1818–1831)*, Karl-Heinz Ilting, ed.
8. Dieter Henrich, “Vernunft in Verwirklichung”, Introduction in G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts: Die Vorlesung von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift*, Dieter Henrich, ed.
9. Tunick, *Hegel’s Political Philosophy*, p. 9.
10. Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts: Die Vorlesung von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift*, Dieter Henrich, ed., p. 51.
11. Hegel, *Logic*, §6.
12. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 54–5 (emphasis added).
13. Hegel to Niethammer, 28 October 1808, *Briefe von und an Hegel*, J. Hoffmeister, ed., pp. 253–4.
14. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, pp. 12–13.
15. Hegel, *Logic*, §163.
16. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 244.
17. Hegel, *Logic*, §161.
18. *Ibid.*, §160.
19. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 240.
20. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 28.
21. Hegel, *Logic*, §160.
22. *Ibid.*, §154.
23. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 233.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 234–5.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 234–5, 255.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 257, 235; see Hegel, *Logic*, §165.
27. Hegel, *Logic*, §214.

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28. See Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 10; Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 98–9, 109, 111.
 29. See Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 412–27.
 30. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, p. 56.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
 32. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §343 (emphasis added).
 33. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 3.
 34. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, p. 109 (emphasis added).
 37. See Michael Inwood, “Hegel, Plato and Greek ‘Sittlichkiet’”, Pelczynski, *The State and Civil Society*, p. 51.
 38. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, p. 111.
 39. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 10.
 40. *Ibid.* (emphasis added).
 41. For further discussion of Hegel’s interpretation of Plato see Chapter 4. Also see Browning, “Plato and Hegel: reason, redemption and political theory”; “The night in which all cows are black: ethical absolutism in Plato and Hegel”; “Hegel’s Plato: the owl of Minerva and a fading political tradition”; Findlay, “Hegelianism and Platonism”, in O’Mally, Algozin and Weiss (eds), *Hegel and the History of Philosophy*; Hardimon, *Hegel’s Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation*; Inwood, “Hegel, Plato and Greek ‘Sittlichkiet’”, in Pelczynski, *The State and Civil Society*.
 42. Avineri, *Hegel’s Theory of the Modern State*, p. 129.
 43. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 38.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 49. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
 51. Among Hegel’s recurring examples of world historical actors, Socrates and (arguably) Luther were philosophers; Caesar and Napoleon were not; Alexander had tuition.
 52. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 45.
 53. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–5.
 54. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 546.
 55. *Ibid.*, p. 547.
 56. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, p. 27.
 57. Though Hegel saw Asian philosophy as leading to the development of Western philosophy, his idea of a philosophical tradition was typically Eurocentric, and he lacked a comprehensive knowledge of non-Western philosophies.
 58. Smith, *Hegel’s Critique of Liberalism*, p. 12.
 59. Yak, *The Longing for Total Revolution*.
 60. Butler, “Introduction”, in *Hegel: The Letters*, pp. 16–18.
 61. Tunick, *Hegel’s Political Philosophy*, p. 93. Indeed, Tunick and Ilting consider the possibility that due to censorship and other constraints the lecture notes on the

Philosophy of Right may provide a more accurate account of Hegel's political views than his published work. See Tunick pp. 7–10.

62. Ritter, *Hegel and the French Revolution: Essays on the Philosophy of Right*, p. 59.

63. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–72.

64. Brod, *Hegel's Philosophy of Politics*, p. 162.

65. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 6.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

67. *Ibid.*

68. Hegel, lecture of 18 September 1806, *Dokumente zu Hegel's Entwicklung*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, p. 352.

CHAPTER 2

Consciousness and Contradiction

Philosophy, for Hegel, is a form of cultural self-consciousness that plays an active role in providing the transition from one historical epoch to the next. Hegel maintained that whenever a philosophy grasps the essence of the preceding age, with all its inherent contradictions, it will also serve to indicate the direction that cultural development must take in attempting to respond to those same difficulties. In accord with this view, Hegel understood his own philosophy to mark the emergence of a new age of self-conscious human development. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, he believed himself to have discovered the pattern underlying all preceding historical development, and to have thereby indicated the direction that this development would take in the epoch following the elaboration of his own philosophical system.

Yet while a philosophy might successfully indicate the general direction of subsequent cultural development, and foreshadow future intellectual trends, Hegel did not believe that it could provide a detailed blueprint. He therefore saw his work as providing no more than a basic foundation for that new age of human self-consciousness which he thought it to have heralded. The specific course of future intellectual development could never be more than implicit within it.

Now, if we are to accept Hegel's understanding of his own philosophical enterprise, then it would follow that the significance of his work could not be fully understood until such time as these deeper insights could have been realized, and raised to self-consciousness, in actual historical development. In other words, if Hegel is correct about the nature of his work, then we will be able to understand it by reflecting upon it *after* the trends that it foreshadowed have been historically explicated. Prior to the time that this historical development has elapsed, the more significant implications of his philosophy

cannot but appear to us as difficult and obscure. Hence, according to Hegel's understanding of his own philosophy, the intellectual developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries should have provided for the explication of insights that could be scarcely more than veiled and implicit within his own system.

What then is the nature of this conceptual foundation which is implicit in Hegelian philosophy and which may now be gradually emerging as "the product of widespread upheaval in various forms of culture"?¹ It has much to do with the structure of self-consciousness, and with the surprising role that contradiction has come to play at the foundation of knowledge, a role which could not have been precisely described in 1830, and which was only first discovered at the turn of the twentieth century. It is a discovery, in other words, that supports the preceding interpretation of Hegel's philosophy as grasping the contradictions at the heart of Western thought and thereby anticipating the subsequent direction of cultural development occurring in response to those difficulties. The discussion begins with an overview of Hegel's treatment of self-consciousness and its relation to those contradictions that eventually did appear at the core of Western thought.

– THE STRUCTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS –

Hegel employed his analysis of self-consciousness toward the construction of a general paradigm with application not only to issues of epistemology and psychology but to all other disciplines. From the Enlightenment onward, efforts to explain human behaviour have worked from the assumption that self-knowledge is derived indirectly. We begin with an ostensibly reliable knowledge of nature from which we attempt to construct a model of consciousness. Our efforts to understand what we are begin with what we are not. Drawing upon the lessons of Kant, Hegel inverts this standard procedure of the Enlightenment and its offshoots in modern science. Instead of attempting self-knowledge within a behavioural model drawn from the natural world, he seeks to organize all aspects of human experience within what Hinchman describes as a paradigm of the "I".² The key to an understanding of the Hegelian system lies in its central contention that the "I", the structure of self-consciousness, is the ultimate paradigm for comprehending the structure of all reality. Much as geometry and mechanich functioned in the philosophy of Hobbes, and much as entelechy functioned in the philosophy of

Aristotle, so in the structure of consciousness Hegel finds the key to the world's intelligibility, the philosophical core from which his central concepts emanate.³

Hegel's concept of self-consciousness may be elucidated by comparison with those conceptions of the self advanced by Hume and Kant. For Hume, the self was nothing more than a class of perceptions: "When I turn my reflexion on *myself*, I never can perceive this *self* without some one or more perceptions; nor can I ever perceive any thing but the perceptions. 'Tis the composition of these therefore, which forms the self."⁴ He was unable to find an enduring and identical self behind this diversity of perceptions: "Consult, ransack your understanding. What find you there except several perceptions or thoughts? What mean you by the word mind? You must mean something that you perceive, or that you do not perceive. A thing not perceived is a contradiction."⁵ It was this contradiction that shook Kant from his dogmatic slumbers and led him to contemplate the significance of the elusive self, an elusiveness which he later summarized as follows:

I am conscious of myself as myself. This thought contains a twofold "I", one as subject and one as object. It is altogether beyond our powers to explain how it should be possible that I, the thinking subject, can be the object of perception to myself, able to distinguish myself from myself. Nevertheless it is an undoubted fact. It indicates a faculty that goes beyond all visual perception, and it is the foundation of an intellect. It marks the complete separation from all beasts, because we have no reason to attribute to them the faculty of saying "I" to themselves. And this opens the prospect of an infinity of self-made conceptions. But we do not assume by this a double personality: only the I who thinks and perceives is the *person*. The I as an object, the I which is being perceived, is simply a thing like all others which are outside me.⁶

In a similar way, Kant considered it an "inconvenience" (*Unbequemlichkeit*) that he could not reflect upon the "I" as subject without reducing it to an object of thought in relation to another subjective "I" which reflects upon the preceding "I" as its object. A further attempt to reflect upon this new subjective "I" results in a repetition of the cycle as it is reduced to an object in relation to another new subjective "I".

In Hegel's view, however, Kant failed to consider that this "inconvenience" might signify a mode of existence far richer than that of the static object that he sought. Hegel's innovation lay in his recognition

that the repetition of this pattern, whereby the subjective “I” is continuously reduced to its object, is not meaninglessly or even “inconveniently” cyclical, but is rather a method for the generation of a dialectical hierarchy. This hierarchy is understood to be dialectical because its development is driven by contradiction, and because consecutively higher levels are increasingly comprehensive. The higher level contains elements that are differentiated and even mutually exclusive at the lower level, such that an occupant of a higher level would appear to be contradictory if considered at a lower level.

This hierarchy develops as the subjective “I”, which does the reflecting, reproduces itself at new and consecutively higher levels each time that it reduces itself to a determinate object upon which it reflects in relation to other determinate objects. Each time that I reflect self-consciously upon my own consciousness my consciousness becomes a determinate object of my thought in relation to a multiplicity of other determinate objects of my thought. For example, I reflect upon myself as a finite thinking being within a room full of tables, books, etc. The “I” which reflects upon my consciousness as an object may be conceived as rising to a new and higher dialectical level, from which it reflects upon that “I” which previously occupied the highest level of self-conscious reflection, but which now occupies a lower level in relation to this new and higher level. Each time that I think about my own thought, or reflect upon my own experience, I generate a new and higher level of this hierarchy. It is significant that this is exactly the role that is played by the achievement of philosophical self-consciousness in Hegel’s metaphilosophy. Each time that a philosophy grasps the essence of the preceding age, it provides the transition to a new historical epoch.

In either case, the highest level is occupied by subjectivity as it exists “in itself”. This is to say that it represents a condition of universality that is completely self-identical, indeterminate and undifferentiated. Though it is related to the objects of my consciousness at the lower levels, it is the sole occupant of the highest level and is not related to anything else at that level. If it were particularized and determinate in relation to anything else at that level then it would not be the highest level. However, it comes to exist “for itself”, which is to say that it becomes differentiated and determinate, as soon as I reflect upon it as a particular object of thought in relation to other particular objects of thought that it excludes. Hegel frequently describes this act in which the subjective “I”, or the concept,

differentiates and determines itself as an object in relation to other objects as a “separating judgement” (*Urteil*). For example, as I reflect upon myself, I judge that I am the entity in this position while the table, over there, is not in this position. In Hegel’s view, the pattern, method or structure of this process of repeated self-determination is neither “inconvenient” nor vacuously circular. Rather it is the basis for a dialectical development that characterizes all forms of experience, a point that Hegel applies to Kant’s remark about the structure of consciousness:

It is surely ridiculous to call this nature of self-consciousness an *inconvenience* or a circle as though it were something deficient, just because the “I” thinks itself and cannot be thought without it being the I which thinks. This is a relationship in which the eternal nature of self-consciousness and of the concept manifests itself within immediate empirical consciousness. It manifests itself because self-consciousness is precisely the *existing* and thus *empirically perceptible*, pure *concept*, the absolute relation to itself which, as separating judgement (*Urteil*), makes itself into an object and is solely this – to make itself into a circle by that very act.⁷

Whereas Hume fragmented the “I” in an unsuccessful attempt to regard it as an object, and whereas Kant’s subject of transcendental apperception is ultimately empty, Hegel considered the “I” on the model of the concept as the activity of providing its own content by differentiating itself into the lower level relationship of subject and object. In other words, Hegelian subjectivity is the continuous elevation of itself to new and higher dialectical levels, which occurs as it determines itself at the lower level as an object of thought, in so far as it is differentiated in relation to, and in exclusion of, other determinate objects of thought. In Hegel’s words, “‘I’ as this absolute negativity is implicitly identity in other-being; ‘I’ is itself and overreaches the object as something *implicitly* sublated; it is *one side* of this relationship and the whole relationship – the light which manifests itself and other things too.”⁸ The undifferentiated and therefore self-identical universality at the higher level continuously determines itself as an object of thought in so far as it is differentiated at the lower level in relation to other objects of thought. At the lower level, the “I” is one side of the subject–object relationship. In so far as Hegel considers this process of self-determination as the basis for the experience of temporal development, or history, it may be said that the “I” as it appears at the lower level is subjectivity *past* considered from the higher level by subjectivity *present*. Yet in so far as it reflects

upon this relationship from the higher level, the “I” encompasses, comprehends or “overreaches” the elements of this relationship as it includes them all as members of the class of objects of which it is conscious. At the higher level, the “I” is undifferentiated and self-identical; at the lower level it is differentiated into the subject-object relationship. Thus, the structure of self-consciousness is the foundation for Hegel’s concept of identity-in-difference, by which he characterizes the development of substance to subjectivity.

In contrast with the transcendental subject of Kantian philosophy, but in accord with his own doctrine of the concept, Hegel understood subjectivity as acquiring an ontological, or substantive, significance in so far as it determines its content at the lower level. This content becomes increasingly rich as the subject rises to new and higher levels, just as my experience becomes increasingly comprehensive from one moment to the next. In each consecutive moment, I am able to reflect back upon myself one additional time, and am thereby enabled to appropriate new experiences. In other words, whereas I might ordinarily think of myself as passively experiencing the flow of time, Hegel maintains that my temporal experience results from the continuous development of my self-consciousness to increasingly higher and more comprehensive dialectical levels. Thus the paradigm of the “I” acquires its universal applicability in so far as it describes the formation process through which all particular elements of experience are produced.

This formation process is the Hegelian whole. It is a whole that differs from traditional rationalist conceptions of the totality, for the Hegelian totality reflects the structure of self-consciousness in so far as the whole is contained within each of its parts. In Hegel’s words, “The whole produces itself as a circle of circles, of which each is a necessary moment, so that the system constitutes the entire idea of its particular elements, which even so appears in each.”⁹

It is this principle of self-containment, at once characteristic of cosmos and consciousness, that separates standard logics from that of Hegel. Standard logics depend upon methods of division and collection that presuppose processes of specification. Such processes implicitly identify any given entity by distinguishing it from other entities, and thereby relating it to that which it excludes. Hence, standard logics cannot provide accounts of absolute totalities for the same reason that Kant could not give an account of subjectivity, and for the same reason that the philosopher cannot provide a detailed description of the future. Nevertheless, standard logic was

forced to confront the spectre of a self-contained, self-negating totality, when, at the turn of the twentieth century, Cantor and Russell discovered the paradox of the universal class.

A discussion of this paradox enables a comparison of the significance of self-containment and contradiction in Hegelian and mathematical logics. It will be helpful, not only toward an understanding of self-consciousness and dialectical development in the Hegelian system, but also toward an appreciation of the ontological significance of Hegelian subjectivity, along with Hegel's unorthodox claim that this subjectivity generates its own objective content.

– CONTRADICTION AND THE THEORY OF TYPES –

The opening chapter suggested that Hegel understood his philosophy as grasping fundamental contradictions at the core of Western thought, and as thereby anticipating the course of its subsequent development. In fact, the turn of the twentieth century marked a dialectical reversal in assumptions fundamental, not only to physical science but also to logic and mathematics. In the latter no less than the former, exhaustive programs of research which seemed on the brink of their completion in or around the year 1900 were transfigured by the discovery of elemental contradictions, stimulating their development in revolutionary new directions, which generally may be regarded as Hegelian. In the fields of logic and mathematics, these developments began in the last decades of the nineteenth century with the initially unrelated efforts of Cantor and Frege.

Modern set theory is generally considered to have originated with a paper published by Cantor in 1895, presenting a method for the characterization of infinite sets by means of transfinite numbers.¹⁰ At the same time, Frege was engaged in a revolt against efforts on the part of his contemporaries to found arithmetic on psychological processes. Arguing that a foundation for arithmetic must enable the discovery of arithmetic facts, he struggled to place the discipline on a purely logical basis.

At the end of the century, both of these investigations took a dramatically dialectical turn when the discovery of closely related contradictions in the work of Cantor and Frege “fell like a bomb-shell”¹¹ among the mathematical preconceptions of the day. The first of these paradoxes, regarding a difficulty in one of Cantor's elementary definitions, was published in 1897 by the Italian mathematician Burali-Forti. By 1901 Bertrand Russell had been led, through his own

meditation upon Cantor's work, to the recognition of a similar antinomy, which posed difficulties for Frege as well. Just as Frege concluded the second volume of his *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik*, after ten years work on that volume alone and considerably more on the edifice of his logical system, he received a letter from Russell revealing that one of his syllogisms led to a contradiction. At the moment that he believed his work to have been completed, Frege was forced to recognize that its foundations would have to be re-examined. He added an appendix to this effect and suspended further work.

In each case, the source of the contradiction seemed to be the fundamental concept of membership in a set. In an effort to avoid such contradictions, and thereafter to join Frege's pursuit of a logical foundation for mathematics, Russell and Whitehead developed a theory of types, which they introduced in *Principia Mathematica* (PM).¹² The theory of types was intended to avoid "a certain kind of vicious circle" arising from the supposition that "a collection of objects may contain members which can only be defined by means of the collection as a whole".¹³ As described by Russell and Whitehead, the vicious circle arising from classes that include themselves as members is remarkably similar to the circular "inconvenience" that Kant encountered in describing subjectivity.

In so far as they are distinct from one another, the elements of a set may be conceived as individuals. However, the elements of most sets may also be treated as sets themselves. Since the elements of sets may be sets themselves, the possibility arises that any given set may be an element of itself. This becomes inevitable whenever considerations involve the set of all sets, propositions, entities, ideas, etc. The absolute inclusivity of such a set evidently requires self-membership. Since the set of all abstract ideas, for example, is certainly an abstract idea, it would appear to include itself. Similarly, if consciousness is defined as the class of objects of which I am conscious, then this is a class which contains itself as a member, since consciousness is invariably conscious of itself. Indeed, Dedekind once employed this element of self-reference, thought reflecting upon thought, to demonstrate the infinity of subjectivity, which he treated as a model for all infinite systems.¹⁴

In accord with Russell's usage, a normal set is understood as a set which does not contain itself as a member; conversely, an abnormal set is one which contains itself as a member. Believing that he had traced the contradiction directly to the concept of a set, Russell concluded that it must derive from the careless application of that

term. He attempted to avoid this difficulty by postulating the theory of types, which had the effect of restricting “sets” to normal sets alone. According to this restriction, sets of individuals, sets of sets, sets of sets of sets, etc. cannot be indiscriminately combined as members of the same set. Instead, the members of a normal set are limited by considerations of homogeneity within a hierarchy of levels, orders or types.

A simple theory of types¹⁵ consists of a hierarchy of levels wherein different types of classes are assigned to different levels. Elements of the lowest order are known as “individuals” and are placed on the 0-th level. Classes of the first level are collections of such individuals, and are themselves the elements from which classes of the second level are formed. Classes of the second level are, in turn, the elements employed in forming classes of the third level. The application of the type theory requires that elements of a class all belong to a given level. The theory provides that a relation of membership can be asserted to hold with any significance only between a given element and a class at the next higher level.

Unfortunately, this theory has been found to contain several unsupported assumptions, ambiguities and difficulties of other sorts.¹⁶ In its failure to understand the deeper nature of that contradiction from which it had sprung, Poincaré worried that the theory of types had unwittingly enclosed the wolf in the same pen as the sheep.¹⁷ Russell himself had expressed similar reservations,¹⁸ and had wondered if the difficulty could be fully resolved by a theory of types

it appears that the special contradiction . . . is solved by the doctrine of types, but that there is at least one closely analogous contradiction which is probably not soluble by this doctrine. The totality of all logical objects, or of all propositions, involves, it would seem a fundamental logical difficulty. What the complete solution of the difficulty may be, I have not succeeded in discovering; but as it affects the very foundations of reasoning, I earnestly commend the study of it to the attention of all students of logic.¹⁹

As initially formulated in *PM*, the theory of types was a purely practical attempt to avoid logical difficulties created by the contradiction. It was regarded, for example, by Tarski “chiefly as a kind of prophylactic to guard the deductive sciences against possible antinomies”.²⁰ On the basis of such utilitarian objectives,²¹ it was recommended by its authors almost as a tactical evasion.²² Beyond

these immediate concerns, Russell and Whitehead were unable (1) to develop a compelling logical argument in support of their theory; (2) to explain why the theory of types should provide a useful conceptual antidote; or (3) to develop any clear connection (logical or otherwise) between the contradiction and the hierarchy by which it was avoided.

However, in his *Principles of Mathematics*, Russell addressed the deeper nature of the contradiction, remarking that “the difficulty arises whenever we try to deal with the class of all entities absolutely or with any equally numerous class”. This led him to suppose that “the conception of the totality of things or of the whole universe of entities and existents, is in some way illegitimate and contrary to logic.”²³ He explained that his discovery of the contradiction had resulted from his reflections upon this totality.

When I first came upon this contradiction, in the year 1901, I attempted to discover some flaw in Cantor’s proof that there is no greatest cardinal . . . Applying this proof to the supposed class of all imaginable objects, I was led to a new and simpler contradiction, namely the following: The comprehensive class we are considering, which is to embrace everything, must embrace itself as one of its members. In other words, if there is such a thing as “everything” then “everything” is something and is a member of the class “everything”. But normally a class is not a member of itself. Mankind, for example, is not a man. Form now the assemblage of all classes which are not members of themselves. This is a class: is it a member of itself or not? If it is, it is one of those classes that are not members of themselves, i.e. it is not a member of itself. If it is not, it is not one of those classes that are not members of themselves, i.e. it is a member of itself. Thus of the two hypotheses – that it is, and that it is not, a member of itself – each implies the contradictory. This is a contradiction.²⁴

Russell’s paradox is so closely related to Cantor’s antinomy that both may be considered as expressions of the same fundamental contradiction. Cantor’s antinomy follows from the application of Cantor’s theorem, concerning the domination of every set by its power set, to the set of everything. Simply stated, Cantor was able to prove that there are always more classes of things of a given kind than there are things of that kind. For example, there are more classes of cats than cats, where this assertion is understood to require that a correlation of the former to the latter must fail to exhaust the former. No correlation of cat classes to cats accommodates all of the cat classes.

This result entails a contradiction when applied to the set of everything. Let V be the set of everything, and let n be the number of its members. Then by Cantor's theorem, V has more than n subsets. But the subsets of V , like everything else, are among its members, so that V has more than n members. Since V has n members and also more than n members, it is self-contradictory.

Beyond the discovery of these antinomies, the foundations of logic and mathematics received another jolt in 1931 when Kurt Gödel published a paper entitled "On formally undecidable propositions of *Principia Mathematica* and related systems", commonly known as Gödel's incompleteness theorem. As its title indicated, the paper was a direct response to the efforts of Frege, Hilbert, Russell and Whitehead to place mathematics on a rigorous logical footing, permitting the deduction of all mathematical theorems from a limited set of axioms by logical means alone. PM was intended to advance these efforts by reducing the problem of consistency of mathematical systems, and of arithmetic in particular, to that of the consistency of formal logic. Gödel's Theorem undermined this program with its demonstration that a formal system for arithmetic cannot be both consistent and complete. In other words, Gödel demonstrated that mathematics and standard logic are either open-ended or inconsistent. Any system of logical or mathematical axioms must imply certain problems that it is incapable of solving, and any completed system is ultimately inconsistent or self-contradictory.

Thus, the efforts of Frege, Russell and Whitehead to place mathematics on a formal/logical foundation were shaken by the discovery of the antinomies and by Gödel's incompleteness theorem. Whereas Russell and Cantor focused upon the self-contradiction of absolute totalities, Gödel's proof showed that the totality of all theorems within an axiomatized system must be either contradictory or incomplete.

– THE CONCEPT –

Standard views of contradiction have been challenged by the inexorability of the logical paradoxes and echoed in the proofs of Gödel. Difficulties that the antinomies raise for the very foundations of logic and mathematics have remained essentially unresolved since their discovery around the turn of the twentieth century, serving instead to inspire those familiar theoretical constructions by which they initially were evaded and subsequently were ignored. By axiomatized

set theory, by the theory of types and by other similar devices, the antinomies have been domesticated, defined away and otherwise rendered illegitimate, while being neither thoroughly nor (as it is often conceded) satisfactorily understood. Hence, there is an air of artificiality surrounding each of these systems, particularly in so far as it seeks to impose *ad hoc* restrictions, with no clear connection to those contradictions it intends thereby to circumvent. As Quine has observed, "Each proposed scheme is unnatural, because the natural scheme is the unrestricted one that the antinomies discredit . . ." ²⁵

The following discussion proposes such a "natural scheme", which accepts the contradictions without restriction and suggests their implication of a simple hierarchy of types. Focusing upon the implications of contradictory classes, it provides an alternative approach to the law of contradiction, whereby a paradoxical situation (such as Russell's paradox or Cantor's antinomy) leads rather naturally to a notion of hierarchy. The exposition applies Hegel's notion of a concept toward an interpretation of class membership, which also incorporates the element of contradiction characteristic of the antinomies, and which seeks to resolve that contradiction by means of its location within a conceptual structure that it is understood to imply.

This is to suggest that a thorough understanding of the antinomies and their relation to the theory of types will involve a deeper exploration of terms that are ordinarily regarded as primitive in set theory and standard logic. Such fundamental concepts as contradiction, class and member will be subjected to a closer scrutiny in order to explore the role of the antinomies at the foundation of logical issues. It is intended that this treatment should help to elucidate the deeper significance of these fundamental terms, along with their standard usage and traditional denotation.

The self-contradictory totality that lies at the heart of the logical antinomies is the point from which Hegelian philosophy begins. On at least one occasion, Russell himself considered Hegel in this context, observing that: "Only the Hegelian philosophy, which nourishes itself on contradictions, can remain indifferent (to fundamental logical antinomies) because it finds similar problems everywhere." ²⁶ While standard logic and set theory are inadequate to an understanding of the antinomies, this is not the case with Hegel's dialectical logic. The following discussion will attempt to show that a simple generalization of Hegel's dialectical method provides the basis for a "natural" and constructive approach precisely because it reflects

the structure which is at once that of consciousness and of the universe as a whole. It will be suggested, in other words, that both consciousness and cosmos are structured according to a principle of self-containment which is also expressed in the antinomies and incorporated in Hegel's doctrine of the concept, such that logic, as Hegel insisted, acquires ontological significance.

This is to say that the outlook of standard logic may be interpreted as occurring within an encompassing framework that may be identified either with the structure of consciousness or with that of the universe, and which presupposes the reality of this self-contradictory totality. It will be suggested that whereas standard logic, with its law of contradiction, is useful for understanding relations among the parts of this whole, as among the objects of thought, we must be prepared to violate that law if we are to understand either the structure of cognition, the universe as a whole or that singularly Hegelian process by which consciousness determines its contents and the whole determines its parts. For whereas the "laws of thought" apply to the parts they do not apply to the whole, or to the relation between part and whole.

This approach involves an elaborate irony. It is ironic, first, in that it applies Hegelian philosophy toward a solution to problems that defeated Russell and Frege, both of whom understood themselves as reacting against Hegel, and it is doubly ironic in that it brings out the similarities in notions of the concept developed by Hegel and Frege. It will be argued that in so far as Frege's notion of the concept inadvertently overlaps that of Hegel, Frege held the key from the very beginning to a deeper understanding of the antinomies.

Frege's notion of a concept echoed that of Hegel in that it reversed the ordinary view of a concept as derived through a process of abstraction and treated it, instead, as a universal applied to the determination of particulars. A concept is ordinarily understood to be derived through the abstraction of a common feature from a multiplicity of otherwise diverse entities. Frege remarked that "If in considering a white cat and a black cat, I disregard the properties which serve to distinguish them, then I get presumably the concept 'cat'".²⁷ In such cases, there is a single concept that applies to a series of otherwise distinct entities. Yet for Frege, abstraction was at best "a means for coming to grasp certain general concepts"²⁸ and not a method by which concepts were properly understood to be formed.

This was because Frege, like Hegel, understood a concept to precede its extension. "I do, in fact, maintain," he wrote, "that the

concept is logically prior to its extension; and I regard as futile the attempt to take the extension of a concept as a class, and make it rest, not on the concept, but on single things.”²⁹ Dummett explains why “the notion of a concept is prior to that of the extension of a concept: we can only form the notion of a class via that of a concept which determines what is and what is not a member of it; a class can be given only as the extension of a concept.”³⁰ This point is worth emphasizing. Because a concept is necessary to determine the membership of a class, a concept must logically precede its extension.

It is because a concept is prior to its extension and is necessary to determine the members of a class that it is something more than any of those members. Frege criticizes Schröder’s assertion that a class with one member is identical with that member³¹ and contends that “a concept does not cease to be a concept simply because only one single thing falls under it . . .”³² Were this not the case, there could be no such thing as an empty class, for such a class could not be derived from abstraction. Hence, Frege concludes that we should not “make the mistake of supposing that a concept can only be acquired by direct abstraction from a number of objects. We can, on the contrary, arrive at a concept equally well by starting from defining characteristics; and in such a case it is possible for nothing to fall under it.”³³

Though Frege’s arguments are persuasive he takes the concept as a primitive and does not give these points further development. Yet it is possible to isolate three senses in which a concept must transcend the members of the class that it defines. First, in so far as the concept is considered as prior to the determination of the members of a class it must comprehend the principle, or rule, for the determination of the members that the class includes in relation to other potential members that the class excludes. Hence, the concept implicitly involves things that are distinct from the members of the class. The concept transcends the members of the class since it provides a principle for determining the members, and must therefore involve more than they do. Second, a concept may be considered as the range of a function which, at least potentially, takes distinct values. It is therefore more than any single member since it is the potential for the determination of this range. Third, when a concept is considered as an abstraction from a number of particulars³⁴ it is more than any of them since it is applicable to, and inclusive of, all of them. In this sense, it includes each element along with other elements from which the first element is distinguished, or it includes a range of mutually

exclusive values. Once again, in so far as it is inherently a range of values it is more than any single value.

In the first and second of these senses, the concept is considered as a potential for the determination of the members of a class, and is logically prior to their distinction. In the third sense, the concept is derived by abstracting a common property from previously existing elements, such that the latter are considered as prior to the class in which they are collected, as well as to the concept of that class. In the *Foundations of Arithmetic*, Frege's presentation of his notion of a concept involves both this sense of a potentiality for determining the members of a class, and of an abstraction derived from actually existing elements;³⁵ and whereas the latter sense is most often the basis for discussions of class membership, Frege's notion of a concept, like Hegel's, stresses the former.

While it is not a feature of most discussions, this principle of potentiality figures in at least two prominent definitions of class membership. Frege's notion of a concept as the defining characteristic for a class of objects is, in certain respects, similar to Brouwer's conception of a set as a rule for the definition, or determination, of its members. For example, the set of all integers less than ten may be considered as a rule for determining which integers are and are not members of the set. In accord with the views of Carnap³⁶ and Frege such a rule, or class, acquires content in so far as it provides for the exclusion of some entities from the class. Thus if "the set of all integers less than ten" is a rule for defining and identifying members of this set, then it is so only through its implicit reference to numbers not less than ten. It is a rule for identifying members of this set only in so far as it is the limit which distinguishes the members of this set from elements which are not members of this set. Similarly PM defines class membership as follows: $x \in (\Phi!z). = .\Phi!x$.³⁷ Those x 's which satisfy Φ are members of the class, which is to say that the class is defined in terms of a concept that may be applied to some x 's to the exclusion of others. In each of these cases, the members of a class may be regarded not only as extensions but as manifestations of the class considered as a rule, or potentiality, for their determination.

As described in Chapter 1, Hegel's dialectical method begins with the condition of abstract universality, which is understood as the potential for the determination of particulars.³⁸ This may be compared with Frege's notion of a concept as an intension that precedes and determines its extension, or with Brouwer's conception of a class as a rule for the determination of its members. Though we

might ordinarily think of concepts as being synthesized through a process of abstraction whereby we focus on a feature common to a number of different experiences, Hegel and Frege agree that a concept logically must precede the particular cases to which it is applied.³⁹ For Hegel, synthesis is associated with the concrete universality that follows the differentiation of abstract universality.

Frege considers such an abstract universal as being extended, or applied, in particular cases, but for Hegel the universal must be regarded as self-determining. We have considered Hegel's claim that the particular "contains the universal".⁴⁰ As a consequence of its self-containment it is "self-contradictory"⁴¹ and thus "is in itself this movement of transition of one of these determinations into the other just because each in itself is its own opposite".⁴² Because "it is absolute negativity it therefore divides and posits itself as the negative (or Other) of itself".⁴³ This occurs when, as a consequence of its self-containment, it reduces itself to membership in relation to itself, so that it is differentiated and determined as a limited particular. Hegel explains that

At first it is pure Concept or the determination of Universality. But the pure or Universal Concept is also only a determinate or particular Concept, which places itself alongside of the others. The Concept is the totality, and thus in its universality or pure identical self-relation is essentially the fact of determining and distinguishing . . .

Secondly, the Concept is hereby as this Particular Concept, or as the determinate Concept which is posited as distinct from others.

Thirdly, Individuality is the Concept which reflects itself out of distinction into absolute negativity. This at the same time is the moment in which it has passed out of its identity into its otherness, and becomes a Judgement. (*Urteil*)⁴⁴

The determination of the universal as a differentiated and limited particular may be conceived as occurring at a lower level in relation to a new and higher level, which Hegel characterizes in terms of individuality. This new and higher level reproduces the "absolute negativity" (self-contradiction) which led to its preceding self-determination. Hence, this higher level undergoes its own determination in relation to yet a higher level.⁴⁵ This is the same self-division or "judgement" by which the subject is understood to determine itself.

Hegel's transitions among these stages may be considered as involving two phases, which are reciprocal in the sense of being mirror images of one another. The first phase involves a transition from

universality to particularity; the second marks a transition from particularity to universality. Yet whereas the condition of universality at the start of the first phase is undifferentiated and therefore abstract, the universality at the end of the second phase is concrete in so far as it incorporates the distinctions of the intermediate stage of particularity. The concept's transition from universality to particularity is the first phase of this process in which the concept determines itself in the form of its particular manifestations. Whereas this phase is distinctly Hegelian, the second phase, involving the transition from particularity to individuality, involves the process of abstraction that ordinarily is associated with conceptualization. The first phase corresponds with conceptions of class membership advanced by Frege and Brouwer wherein the class (or its concept) is logically prior to its members. The second phase corresponds to ordinary notions of set formation, wherein the elements precede, and are subsequently collected within, the class.

– AN INTERPRETATION OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP –

Drawing upon these conceptions of universality and class membership, I wish to introduce a notation (M) that focuses upon a class as being both (when considered intensionally) a potentiality for, and (when considered extensionally) the actuality of, the determination of its members: $x_1, x_2, \dots \in (x)$, where (x) will be understood to represent a class defined in terms of the preceding discussion of a concept. If x denotes an arbitrary member of the class then (x) either actually or potentially includes values that are different from x , such that $(x) \neq x$. $((x))$ represents a class that has (x) for a member and perhaps others. In standard notation we should write $\{x:\Phi(x)\}$ where Φ is the concept; but the notation I am using, while not entirely unambiguous, will render arguments that follow easier to read. When this notation is used the concept will be clarified either by definition or by context. (Compare the old-fashioned notation $f(x)$ for the function rather than the value.)

This notation is compatible with standard conceptions of membership. In so far as it is a potential for the determination of its members (x) is similar to the first two senses of a concept discussed above, and with Brouwer's definition of a set as a rule for the determination of its members. In so far as (x) may be produced by abstraction from differentiated particulars, its definition is concordant with the third of the preceding senses of a concept, and with ordinary assumptions

regarding class membership. In either capacity (x) is compatible with the definition of class membership provided by PM. Finally, this conception of membership is consistent with Cantor's definition of a set as a "whole . . . of definite, distinguishable objects".⁴⁶ In other words, the distinction of $x_1, x_2 \dots x_n$ is understood to imply their relationship, and their relationship is the concept of which they are extensions. The concept that includes $x_1, x_2 \dots x_n$ is understood to be "a whole" of definite and distinguishable objects constituting a class. In this respect the intension is one and the extension is a multiplicity of particulars.

Because it is understood to contain a range of values that are distinct and mutually exclusive at the level of its members, any class would be contradictory if considered as being one of its own members. Ordinarily this is not a problem since normal classes are considered as occupying a typological level consecutively higher than that of their members. Yet it is because they are considered as members of themselves that abnormal classes are contradictory.

Most discussions of the antinomies do not proceed beyond this contradiction. But from the standpoint of M, this contradiction may be considered as the potential for the "natural" and unrestricted generation of a typological hierarchy, and any abnormal class may be regarded not as a determinate entity (that is, displaying fixed and well-defined properties) but rather as the *process* of generating that hierarchy. This is because an abnormal class is at once a class and a member, so that it cannot be considered as one without also being considered as the other. Whereas Russell and Whitehead viewed this feature as culminating in a vicious circle, it may also be regarded as a progression through a typological hierarchy, such that every time the class is considered as a member, it is considered as a member in relation to an increasingly comprehensive class, or it is considered as a member in relation to a new version of itself occupying a higher typological level. In this way, an abnormal class may be regarded as a process of reproducing progressively comprehensive versions of itself at consecutively higher typological levels. And if such a class is regarded as reproducing itself at consecutively higher typological levels, then it may be regarded as the process of generating a typological hierarchy.

Each determinate form implies another more comprehensive than itself in that the latter transcends that distinction by which the former is determined. Hence, each determination may be conceived as occurring at a typological level lower than that at which its limitation is

transcended, and conversely, the transcendence of any distinction occurs at a typological level higher than that at which the distinction occurs. In accord with the preceding definition of membership, each determinate form may be conceived as a member of a class, where this class is understood to occupy a higher level in so far as it transcends that distinction characteristic of its lower level membership.

Thus, if M is applied to any abnormal class (y) , then (y) is y , in so far as it is conceived as a member, and (y) , in so far as it is conceived as the class that contains that member. But if it is (y) , then in so far as it contains itself as a member, it is $((y))$. But if it is $((y))$, then in so far as it contains itself as a member it is also $((y))$, etc. y , (y) , $((y))$, $((y))$, etc. may be conceived as occupying consecutively higher typological levels. The same progression is conceived to be implicit within any class that contains itself as a member. In this way an abnormal class may be conceived not as a determinately specified entity but as a process which generates a typological hierarchy. This process involves the two phases of conceptual formation described at the end of the preceding section. Beginning with an abnormal class, the first phase corresponds with its reduction to membership in relation to a new and higher level, while the second phase corresponds to the containment of this (these) element(s) within a class at that higher level.

The reader may wish to refer to the formalization of this process in the appendix, which may be read in lieu of the next two sections of the text. Though portions of the appendix are relatively technical, much of that discussion is accessible to, and may provide a useful supplement for, the non-specialized reader. However, the following discussion summarizes the results of the appendix, which may be omitted without loss of general coherence.

— AN INTERPRETATION OF CANTOR'S ANTINOMY —

This approach to self-containment may be applied to an interpretation of Cantor's antinomy. The set V of everything is abnormal since it contains everything and therefore must contain itself. Yet whereas set V is found to be contradictory when considered in light of Cantor's theorem concerning the domination of every set by its power set, this contradiction may be understood as illustrating the pattern of development implicit in any abnormal set.

Thus, for example, if V has n members, then by Cantor's proof it has some greater number p of subsets. But the subsets of V , like

everything else, are among its members. Hence, if V has n members, then it also has p members. Since $p > n$, p includes n members plus other elements not included in n . Thus, the determination that cardinal $V = n$ implies that $V = p$, where n and p are natural numbers and $n < p$. But if V is determined to have p members, then by Cantor's theorem it must have q members, where $p < q$. Then, if V has q members, it must have some greater number of members r , etc. Since each succeeding natural number (taken in the set theoretic sense of von Neumann) contains its predecessor plus elements that its predecessor excludes, it may be regarded, in light of M , as a class that includes its predecessor as a member. And in so far as each class becomes a member at the succeeding level, this pattern of development may be understood to generate a hierarchy of types. According to this interpretation, each time set V turns out to have more members than it has, it is considered to have undergone a transition to a higher, and consequently more inclusive, typological level.

In other words, V is considered to be self-contradictory in the sense that it has a multiplicity of mutually exclusive attributes, associated in this case with the quantification of its members. This contradiction, however, is understood to be resolved in so far as these attributes are expressed at different typological levels. Thus when a particular determination (for example, a total of n members) is found to imply another (for example, a total of p members), this is interpreted to signify a transition from a lower to a higher typological level. The result is a self-contradictory totality expressed throughout a hierarchy of types, such that attributes which would be mutually exclusive if considered as occurring at the same typological level, are not contradictory when considered as occurring throughout a sequence of typological levels. In this way, the contradictory aspect of set V may be understood as being resolved when its mutually exclusive elements appear, not simultaneously but in sequence, throughout the levels of a hierarchy. Set V is conceived, then, as the connection between the determinations of its membership at each consecutive level, and thus is considered as the process of generating this typological hierarchy.

Since V has both n and p members, the assertion that it has only n members may be viewed as a one-sided abstraction from a multifaceted actuality. This abstraction is self-contradictory in so far as it implies its own negation, or in so far as it implies that which it excludes, such that the assertion that V has n members is found to imply that V has p members. Thus, when a single attribute of V 's

membership is taken in abstraction from another, the former is found to imply the latter, and to thereby display all of the difficulties associated with the antinomies.

However, these difficulties are eliminated with the elimination of the abstraction, so that V may be understood to have both n and p members. The problem, in other words, is resolved when V is permitted to be self-contradictory in the sense that it is understood to have mutually exclusive attributes expressed throughout a series of determinations occurring at consecutive typological levels. The implication of one of these attributes by the other is subsequently interpreted to signify a transition from a lower to a higher typological level, such that a determination at any typological level implies the relation of that level to a higher level still. This results in the conception of a self-contradictory totality expressed throughout a typological hierarchy, wherein attributes which would be mutually exclusive (and therefore contradictory) if considered as occupying the same typological level are not mutually exclusive when conceived as occurring throughout a sequence of typological levels. Thus, V , which has both n and p members, is understood to have n members at one level and p members at another, where $n < p$ means that p includes n .

Those difficulties traditionally associated with the antinomies may be eliminated when the highest typological level, or the class of the whole, is allowed to be self-contradictory in such a way that its conception as the highest level must always imply its membership in a higher level still. In other words, the self-contradiction of such a class is understood to resolve, or to spend, itself through its generation of a typological hierarchy wherein it determines itself as a succession of non-contradictory, or normal classes. Thus, whereas the totality continuously violates the law of non-contradiction, this violation may be interpreted as its sequential self-determination throughout a series of forms concordant with that law. In this way, any abnormal classes may be regarded not as a determinate entity but rather as a process for the generation of a typological hierarchy.

The laws and assumptions of standard logic may be applied to any of the elements organized within a typological hierarchy, so that they are generally applied with legitimacy to anything considered to be a part of a larger totality. Yet conceptions of absolute totalities, such as set V , defy the assumptions of standard logic in so far as they violate the law of contradiction. Nevertheless, the characteristic self-contradiction of such conceptions may be understood to signify,

and necessitate, their expression throughout a sequence of mutually exclusive determinations, ordered within a hierarchy of types. Hence, by nature of its abnormalcy, the set of everything may be conceived as a totality which continuously determines itself in such a way as to generate that structure of relations within which the laws of standard logic apply.

– SELF-CONTAINMENT AND A HIERARCHY OF TYPES –

Since this progression commences with a totality constituting an abnormal class, and since a class which contains itself as a member is both a class and a member of that class, the fundamental categories of class and member may be conceived as initially undifferentiated within this condition of abnormalcy and as subsequently differentiated out of it in relation to one another.

This, of course, was not the way that I presented this development in the preceding section, where I initially presupposed the distinction of the categories of class and member in a more or less conventional manner. However, I am now suggesting that once this progression is understood it is possible to regard it not only as producing a hierarchy of types but also as producing the conceptual framework necessary for the differentiation of the categories of class and member. Whereas these categories are customarily presupposed, I am arguing that the present interpretation of the universal class provides a basis for their derivation from a more primitive notion which may be regarded as prior to the proper distinction of these categories. In other words, I understand V as an entity indeterminate with regard to the categories of class and member, which (1) provides for the progression described in the preceding section; (2) leaves in its “wake” a series of levels that may be occupied by classes and members; (3) thereby provides the necessary framework for the differentiation of classes and members; and (4) consequently permits the distinction of the categories of class and member.

Once the categories of class and member have been differentiated, the typological hierarchy may be conceived as developing both upward and downward from any arbitrarily selected level in accord with the preceding description. That which is initially a class, when considered in relation to its lower level member, also implies a new and higher level class in relation to which it acquires the status of membership. A similar progression may be conceived as occurring in the opposing direction from higher to lower typological levels. That

which was initially determined as a member in relation to a higher level class also may be conceived as a class in relation to a lower level still. In this way, a typological hierarchy may be conceived as developing both upward and downward from out of an abnormal class.

However, a certain irregularity arises when this progression is conceived as culminating in either a highest or a lowest typological level. The highest level in a hierarchy of types – as, for example, the set of everything – is all inclusive; is not exclusive; and is consequently not distinguished from anything. Since it is neither distinguished from nor exclusive of anything, and since it has no limit, it cannot be conceived as having external determination of any sort. This is to say that it cannot be conceived as having any exterior limitation, or it cannot be conceived as a determinate whole. In the words of Russell and Whitehead it has “no total”.⁴⁷ This highest typological level must remain indeterminate in so far as no conception may be formed of it as a totality, without thereby constituting a new highest typological level, characterized by that same indeterminacy associated with its predecessor. In other words, this aspect of indeterminacy is a feature of the highest level, whatever it may be. It is possible to remove this indeterminacy through the formulation of some determinate conception of that level, but not without constituting a new highest level to which the same indeterminacy adheres. It is significant that this progression is identical with the development of self-consciousness as described in the section entitled “The Structure of Consciousness”.

A similar indeterminacy is associated with the interior of the lowest typological level. As previously indicated, the 0-th level of a simple typological hierarchy is occupied by elements known as individuals. Since these individuals inhabit the lowest level, they are not conceived as being classes themselves, as are the elements at every other level. Consequently, they are not understood to be constituted by lower level elements, and are therefore indivisible and unanalyzable, at least in so far as set theoretic considerations apply.

Just as the highest level is exclusive of nothing, and is therefore indeterminate with respect to its exterior, so the lowest level is inclusive of nothing and is therefore indeterminate with respect to its interior. The highest typological level can be understood, as it were, from the inside in terms of its members, but it cannot be comprehended externally, that is as a totality or as a whole. On the other hand, the individual may be comprehended externally, as a whole distinguished in relation to that which it excludes, but it cannot be understood internally, for it has no members. Hence, the interior

of the latter would seem to be no less ambiguous, indeterminate, infinite and logically problematic than the exterior of the former. The principle of the identity of indiscernibles would suggest that the indeterminacy thereby associated with the exterior of the highest typological level may be identified with the indeterminacy attributed to the interior of the individual members of the lowest typological level.

The appendix demonstrates that set theory is consistent with the identification of entities occurring at the highest and lowest levels of the typological hierarchy, and I wish to suggest that this identification is the significance of that self-membership characteristic of the abnormal class from which the typological hierarchy is now interpreted as arising. In other words, the indeterminacy at the opposing extremes of the hierarchy may be conceived as containing itself in so far as the same indeterminacy associated with the "interior" of each individual is identified with the "exterior" of the highest typological level, or it is identified with that which ultimately contains every individual. In this way, each individual may be conceived, at once, as containing and as contained within all of the others.

The appendix draws upon the work of Oberschelp in order to formalize this identification in terms of self-containment. In his "*Eigentliche Klassen als Urelemente in der Mengenlehre*" Oberschelp begins with the standard distinction between proper classes (which are defined as not belonging to anything and which therefore may be conceived as representing the highest level of a typological hierarchy), and individuals (which have no members, which therefore may be conceived as occupying the lowest level, and which Oberschelp describes as Urelements). Oberschelp demonstrates that it is possible to produce a new system of axiomatic set theory which can be derived by a certain principle from standard set theory. One can describe this principle as the replacement of Urelements by proper classes. The result is neither an Urelement nor a proper class, but a self-containing entity which I describe as an Ultimate, and which I conceive as preceding and producing the categories of class and member as it generates a typological hierarchy.

Thus, the present interpretation conceives the two extremes of the hierarchy as components of a continuous typological structure, wherein every level is at once the highest in so far as it is the whole which contains the structure, and lowest in so far as it is contained within the whole. It consequently treats these extremes as opposing views of an identical entity, that entity being nothing other than the

abnormal set of everything and the hierarchy of levels which it implies.

In so far as the highest level is determinate with respect to the distinctions among the membership constituting the levels of its interior, while being indeterminate with respect to its exterior, it will be conceived as a “view” of the typological hierarchy upward from below, or from the perspective of a member. On the other hand, in so far as the lowest typological level is determinate with respect to its exterior, but indeterminate with respect to its interior, it will be treated as a “view” of the outside of the typological hierarchy, downward from above, or from the perspective of a more inclusive class. On this interpretation, the conception of an individual simply is the exterior “view” of the highest level — as, for example, the set of everything — as it appears when its self-contradiction drives it to become a member in a new and higher level class; while a conception of the set of everything is the interior “view” of an individual, as it appears from the perspective of its “lower level members”. On the one hand, the individual is understood to be the way that the set of everything appears when it is conceived to be contained within that which it contains. On the other hand, the set of everything is considered as the way that the individual appears when it is conceived as containing that within which it is contained. In this way, set V is understood to be contained within each of the individuals that it includes.

— SELF-CONTAINMENT IN THE — STRUCTURE OF SPACETIME

This model of self-containment may be usefully illustrated, and its ontological significance may be better understood, through an interpretation of those revolutionary developments in physical science that occurred around the turn of the twentieth century, at the same time that Russell and Cantor were discovering the logical antinomies. In addition, this application provides further support for the preceding metaphilosophical interpretation of Hegel’s philosophy as anticipating subsequent intellectual development.

For example, the conception of a self-containing typological hierarchy in the preceding section may be illustrated in terms of a hypersphere, particularly in so far as the latter figures in physical conceptions of the universe. Einstein’s theory of gravitation is compatible with two conceptions of the universe: (1) a hyperspherical

space, which expands and then contracts to a point, and which may be conceived as finite and unbounded or as self-limiting; (2) a space that expands forever. Were the universe hyperspherical, then all of its space could be covered by a sphere expanding outward from any point within it. However, as the circumference of such a sphere expanded outward, it would eventually turn into a point and disappear, in a manner analogous with the circular lines of latitude as they approach either of the poles on the spherical surface of the earth. Thus, every point on the sphere may be regarded either as the centre, which is contained within the circumference, or as the circumference, which contains the centre. In other words, every point on the sphere may be considered as containing itself.

Let a point x be chosen arbitrarily as that from which the space of this universe is conceived to be expanding outward, and let point y be that into which it contracts. Then point y may be understood as the outermost periphery of this universe which contains all space within it. On the basis of the present interpretation, point y is understood to be point-like precisely because it represents the highest level of spatial expansion and is therefore undifferentiated. This is to say that it is not differentiated, for example, into numerous points constituting a line, but is rather collapsed within a single undifferentiated point. Moreover, the nondifferentiation of point y , which represents the outermost periphery of the universe, is considered to be identical with the nondifferentiation at the interior of point x at its centre. This is neither to say that point x has an interior nor that point y has an exterior, in the sense that there is anything determinate, measurable or in any sense differentiated inside of point x or outside of point y . Rather it is to suggest that the indeterminacy at the centre of the innermost point of such a universe may be conceived as identical with the indeterminacy of its periphery; or that the circumference of such a universe is contained within its centre.

In so far as this universe is conceived to contain itself, then the periphery contains the centre, but the centre also contains the periphery. Thus, as the nondifferentiation at the exterior of the circumference is considered to be identical with the nondifferentiation at the interior of the centre, the centre may be conceived as containing the periphery, so that the universe may be understood as expanding over and over again from out of point x until it reaches point y , and thereby returns to the "interior" of point x . If a series of expansions is conceived as occurring in this way from out of point x , then each consecutive expansion may be considered as containing its predeces-

sor in so far as the point x , from which any given expansion commences, is understood to contain the point y in which the preceding expansion culminated. And in so far as each successive universe is more inclusive than its predecessor, this sequence of universes may be conceived as ordered according to a hierarchy of types, such that each consecutive expansion is understood to occur at a level higher than that by which it is preceded.

This is to suggest that in so far as the periphery of a hyperspherical universe is point-like, it may be conceived as undifferentiated, and that this nondifferentiation may be interpreted as that indeterminacy associated previously with the self-containment of set V . Then, in so far as it is considered to be self-contradictory or abnormal, the highest level of this universe may be conceived as reduced to membership in relation to a new and higher level. This reduction to the status of membership occurs when the periphery of the preceding universe becomes that point which serves as the centre for the expansion of the next universe, such that this centre point is now contained within a new and more inclusive periphery.

Thus the circumference of the universe may be understood to be contained within its origin, and spacetime may be regarded as collapsing into the point from which it originates. This may be understood as occurring continuously, or as involving a sequence of universes (that is, cosmic expansions) nesting within (that is, contained within) one another.

Observation of the Hubble redshift indicates that space is expanding outward from every point in space. On the basis of this and other observations, the "big bang" theory proposes that spacetime began with the "explosion" of a singularity, and that the centre of this "explosion" is, in some sense, present at every point in spacetime. Yet if we place a powerful telescope at any point in space and point that telescope in every direction, then what we will find in any direction at the limit of the universe is the big bang. As we peer in every direction we find the big bang surrounding us as if the big bang were a spherical shell in which we, and all of the spacetime of our universe, are contained. Thus, on the one hand, the big bang is contained at every point within spacetime as the centre from which space is expanding outward. Yet, on the other hand, all of spacetime is contained within the big bang in the sense that we see the big bang surrounding us, as if it were the shell of an enclosing sphere. If we rely strictly upon observation, and forsake our commonplace (and perhaps metaphysical) assumptions about the nature of space and

time, then there would appear to be some empirical confirmation for the self-containment of the universe.

In light of the preceding topological considerations Rucker⁴⁸ identifies the original spacetime singularity with that at its end, in a toroidal model. He adds that “If one has a hyperspherical space, then the view that all the singularities are a point is quite attractive.”⁴⁹ Hence, “it could be that all of the known singularities – initial, final, black hole and white hole – are the same”.⁵⁰ Building on proposals by Clifford⁵¹ and Wheeler,⁵² Rucker continues,

A slightly different view is that mass particles are actually tiny black holes, event horizons around a singularity. If, again, all singularities were the same point, then all of space-time, and all matter as well, would simply be a maze of “grooves” connected to the central singularity.⁵³

Thus Rucker arrives at a conception of a self-contained universe: “What would these little hyperspheres be made of – pure curved space? Perhaps, but another interesting possibility is that each of these little hyperspheres is somehow identical with the large hypersphere which is our space.”⁵⁴

Singularities represent fundamental indeterminacies in the sense that they are locations in the spacetime metric where spacetime (and indeed physics) comes to an end. They represent indeterminacies in the sense that we can neither know nor say anything about what happens inside a “black hole”. But if a singularity is, in this sense, absolutely indeterminate, then there can be no basis for distinguishing one such indeterminacy (that is, the interior of one black hole) from another (black hole interior). Leibnitz’s principle of the identity of indiscernibles would suggest that we cannot separate one from another, or in simple terms, the interior of one black hole is the interior of all black holes.

This does not mean that one black hole cannot be separated from another *within* spacetime, for in so far as singularities are considered as occurring *within* spacetime they clearly may occupy different positions. Yet it is to say that while, on the one hand, singularities occur *within* spacetime, they are also *without* spacetime. I wish to suggest that singularities are within spacetime in the sense that they are contained within spacetime, and that they are without spacetime, not only in the sense that they are the end of spacetime but also in the sense that they contain spacetime. If spacetime begins and perhaps ends with the indeterminacy associated with a singularity, and if this same absolute

indeterminacy exists at the encompassing periphery of the visible universe, then these are two senses in which spacetime is contained within this indeterminacy.

Thus, on the one hand, a singularity is a physical indeterminacy that occurs within spacetime; but, on the other hand, it is an indeterminacy which is beyond, and in a sense contains, spacetime. In the latter sense there is only one singularity, and all of the singularities that occur within spacetime are manifestations of the one singularity which at once contains spacetime and is contained at various different locations within spacetime. In this way, spacetime singularities may be considered as an expression of the self-containment of the universe, such that it is from a single self-contained singularity that all of spacetime emerges, and it is within that same singularity that spacetime is sustained.

It may be observed that this structure reproduces that of subjectivity, and that the compatibility of Hegel's conceptions of the dialectical method, subjectivity and self-containment with the hyperspherical universe of general relativity tends to support the interpretation of Hegelian philosophy as anticipating subsequent intellectual development. Hegel's discussion of the Idea involves a conception of the universal totality in terms of this same self-containment. In his Introduction to *HP* he writes

it is one Idea in its totality and in all its individual parts, like one life in a living being, one pulse throbs throughout all its members. All the parts represented in it, and their systematisation, emanate from the one Idea; *all these particulars are but the mirrors and copies of this one life*, and have their actuality only in this unity. Their differences and their various qualities are only the expression of the Idea and the *form contained within it*. Thus the Idea is the central point, which is also the periphery, the source of light, which in all its expansion does not come without itself, but remains present and immanent within itself. Thus it is both the system of necessity and its own necessity, which also constitutes its freedom.⁵⁵

– SELF-CONTAINMENT IN THE QUANTUM UNIVERSE –

Hegel's ontological unification of traditional conceptions of necessity and freedom⁵⁶ has been echoed in the dramatic developments of quantum mechanics, which commenced from the year 1900, at the time that Russell was discovering his paradox. Quantum physics has done much to challenge traditional distinctions of subject and object in a manner remarkably consistent with Hegel's ontology. And as

with general relativity, quantum physics provides for a conception of cosmological self-containment. Much as in the preceding interpretation of the universal class, quantum mechanics permits a view of the physical universe as being ultimately indeterminate when considered as a whole, while nevertheless contained within itself in the form of that inevitable indeterminacy which must characterize the interior of its lowest level elements, whatever they may be.

Thus, whether we are considering atoms at the outset of the twentieth century or hadrons, leptons and quarks today, our physical understanding of the world involves some lowest level entity which has, at least at that moment in the history of science, an indeterminate interior. If scientific reductionism subsequently penetrates this interior and understands it to be differentiated into components, then the interior of these components will remain indeterminate, at least for a period of time. It appears that however deeply we may penetrate the building blocks of the physical universe, there will always be a lowest level, the interior of which is indeterminate. On the present view, this interior indeterminacy at the lowest level of existence is indistinguishable from that of the universe as a whole, such that, by the principle of the identity of indiscernibles, the universe as a whole may be conceived as contained within the undifferentiated interior of each of its components.

Quantum physics has produced similar proposals. In a series of articles published in the *American Journal of Physics*, Joe Rosen has suggested that the universe as a whole is contained within each of its quantum fluctuations, an assertion that depends upon the inexorable indeterminacy of these fluctuations at the lowest level of spatio-temporal differentiation.⁵⁷ A similar view had been previously outlined by Edward Tryon.⁵⁸ Moreover, John Wheeler, writing in his classic text on *Gravitation*, has observed that because of quantum fluctuations, the same indeterminacy associated with the spacetime singularity that produced the universe as a whole must also recur in the form of a singularity at every point in spacetime.⁵⁹

Finally, the Berkeley physicist Geoffrey Chew has proposed what is known as the "Bootstrap Hypothesis". According to his proposal every hadron (a prominent type of elementary particle) is constituted by all of the other millions of millions of hadrons in the universe. In a surprisingly Hegelian twist, this hypothesis requires that the universe develops itself, or "pulls itself up by its bootstraps", with guidance from nothing more than the law of contradiction.⁶⁰ Summarizing his own quantum approach to self-containment, David Bohm wrote that,

“The totality of existence is enfolded within each region of space (and time). So, whatever part, element, or aspect we may abstract in thought, this still enfolds the whole and is therefore intrinsically related to the totality from which it has been abstracted.”⁶¹

Similarities between such views and those of Hegel appear to lend further support to the thesis that Hegelian philosophy anticipates subsequent intellectual development. They are compatible with Hegel's highly controversial contention that the structure of subjectivity may be extended to substance, and indeed to physical entities. They further coincide with the view that Hegel's paradigm of the “I” is most readily applicable to precisely those phenomena that are least accessible to the presuppositions of the Enlightenment. All of the physical illustrations above depend upon relativistic and quantum mechanical considerations, which notoriously exceed the assumptions of the Enlightenment upon which Newtonian physics is based.

– SELF-CONTAINMENT AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS –

Adopting an Hegelian approach to logical paradox, the preceding sections attempted to show that such contradictions could be interpreted as providing a foundation for the revolutionary developments of twentieth-century science and mathematics. The present section attempts to apply that interpretation toward a model of self-consciousness suitable for an understanding of social and political relations occurring throughout an historical process. Since the discussion has been extended beyond the logico-mathematical context within which set theory ordinarily obtains, it is appropriate to substitute the terminology of universality and particularity for that of class and member. Hence, a universal is defined as a class, property or predicate; while a particular is defined as an element of a class. In Hegelian terminology, typological levels are described as dialectical levels.

Consciousness may be conceived on the model of self-membership in so far as it invariably comprehends a class of objects, among which it is itself a member. In other words, consciousness is an object for itself in so far as it is conscious of itself, or in so far as it is self-consciousness. This is simply to say that I ordinarily experience myself among the class of objects of which I am conscious, such that I experience myself as limited and particularized in so far as I am differentiated from the other members of this class.

On the present interpretation, my experience of myself as a

differentiated member of a class of objects is understood to involve a relationship between two dialectical levels. My determination as a particular member of this class is considered to occur at a lower level only through its relation to a higher level characterized by the indeterminacy and nondifferentiation of these members. This lower level determination of myself includes all of those determinate attributes by which I ordinarily conceive myself, including my spatio-temporal location in relation to those differentiated objects and events that I experience about me.

Yet in addition to the class of these objective determinations upon which I reflect at any given moment, there is also that which does this reflecting. On the present interpretation, this reflective activity is understood to involve the relationship of these lower level particulars by means of their comparison or contrast as, for example, when I contrast my spatial location with that of other objects in the room. Such a contrast is understood to involve the differentiation of these particulars (that is, their appearance as differentiated spatial positions) conceived as occurring at the lower level, and, on the other hand, their relationship or connection, which is considered to involve their combination within the unity of my consciousness occupying a higher dialectical level. In so far as my subjectivity occupies the higher level it is self-identical and undifferentiated; in so far as I occupy the lower level, I am determinate and differentiated from other objects of consciousness. In this respect, the structure of consciousness corresponds with Hegel's conception of identity in difference, though this is hardly surprising since the latter was developed from analysis of the former.

In so far as I reflect upon the particular contents of my consciousness from the higher level vantage point of my encompassing universality, I am enabled to recognize their limitations. Since this higher level universality includes that which is excluded by each of its elements at the lower level, it involves a capacity for reflection upon each of these in relation to that which it excludes, and thus for its experience as a particular determination. In so far as the lower level determination occurs only in relation to higher level indeterminacy, the experience of particularity, such as that which provides the content for any observation, is understood to imply a comparison of these levels, whereby the lower level appears as differentiated only when considered from the vantage point of higher level nondifferentiation. In terms of M , x is determined as x only in relation to (x) . In this way, subjectivity may be conceived in terms the preceding inter-

pretation of self-containment, whereby it continuously determines itself, whether through reflection or volition, as it rises to new and higher levels.

In so far as it is conceived as occupying the highest level, my subjectivity is that which reflects upon, and in a sense contains, all of the objects of which it is conscious. However, one of the objects that it contains is itself, since I am also conscious of my consciousness. I experience myself at this lower level as having certain determinate attributes, including physical properties such as spatio-temporal location. I can experience my physical properties in so far as I experience myself as determined at this lower level in relation to, and as differentiated from, all of the other objects that are contained within the class of objects of which I am conscious, but I am never able to touch or view my own subjectivity. All that I can do is touch my head, or look at my face in the mirror, and assume that my subjectivity somehow occupies the indeterminate interior of that particular object before me. Certainly, I can reflect upon my own thoughts, but in keeping with Kant's complaint, they must always appear to me as objective and limited, at least in time. I can never reflect upon that which is doing the reflecting without thereby turning it into that which is reflected upon, and which is at least temporally determined, in relation to something else which is now reflecting upon it.

Yet as I touch my head or look at my face in the mirror, the indeterminate interior of this determinate object before me contains that same subjectivity within which it is contained in so far as my face or head is an object of my consciousness. Though I am a differentiated object upon which I reflect, the indeterminate interior of my objective existent (that is, my unseen subjectivity behind my face in the mirror) none the less contains that same undifferentiated subjectivity that also occupies the higher level (in so far as I reflect upon my determinate objective existence) and thereby contains that objective entity within which it is contained, along with all those other determinate entities in relation to which it is differentiated. Thus, the undifferentiated self-identity at the higher level is contained within the differentiated entity at the lower level, and thereby remains identical with itself in its differentiation, once again illustrating Hegel's doctrine of identity in difference.

As I reflect upon myself, my objective existence is a particular element of my experience which contains that subjective universality within which it is contained. Now the class of objects of which I am

conscious contains objects other than myself, some of which I take to be other subjects. I experience them among the objects at the lower level upon which I reflect, and whereas I also observe their physical properties, and whereas I can infer their subjective properties from their physical attributes, I can make no direct observations of their subjectivity.

Hence, these other subjects may also be conceived on the model of self-containment. On this view, it is the same self-identical, undifferentiated universality (or subjectivity) that may be conceived as occupying the highest dialectical level, and thereby is associated with any of these subjects in so far as it experiences or thinks; and which also may be conceived as occupying the undifferentiated interior of the elements at the lowest dialectical level, and thereby is associated with any of these subjects in so far as it is an object of thought or experience. The same subjectivity that occurs at the lower level as differentiated within a multiplicity of finite subjects with mutually exclusive physical properties, is also completely undifferentiated at the higher level.

Thus, subjectivity may be regarded as a universal that contains itself. It appears at both the higher level, in so far as it contains itself, and at the lower level, in so far as it is contained within itself. This universality is indeterminate at the highest level in so far as it is not differentiated from anything else. It is indeterminate at the lowest level in so far as the interior of the individual elements at the lowest level are understood to be completely undifferentiated and unanalyzable. In either case it is the same undifferentiated universality, and that is part of what it means for this universality to contain itself. In accord with the preceding interpretation, the indeterminacy of the lowest level is ultimately indistinguishable from the highest, such that the exterior of the highest level is understood to be contained within the interior of the lowest, or such that the highest level, which ultimately contains the elements at the lowest level, is also contained within the interior of each of these lowest level elements.

On this view, it is only the lower level that is differentiated in space and time. The higher level is without spatiotemporal differentiation and all other determinate attributes. I ordinarily conceive of myself as a finite and limited entity because I regularly reflect upon myself as a particular member of the class of objects of which I am conscious. Yet in so far as self-consciousness is conceived on the model of self-containment, I am more than this particular object upon which I reflect. I am also that which does this reflecting; which can never be

an object of reflection; and which is entirely without determinate attributes. That which does the reflecting from the higher level is subjectivity or Hegelian spirit, and it is this same undifferentiated subjectivity that experiences the rich diversity of the world from each of our mutually exclusive perspectives. In other words, it is the same undifferentiated subjectivity which is differentiated in all of us in so far as we are considered as determinate objects at the lower level. When we look into one another's eyes it is the same subjectivity that is viewing itself from each of these differentiated, opposing and mutually exclusive perspectives. Our opposing perspectives may be conceived as reciprocal, and mutually exclusive actualizations of the same indeterminate universality.

Here it should be emphasized that in so far as it is conceived as occurring at the highest dialectical level subjectivity is absolutely indeterminate. No determinate entities of any sort can occupy the highest dialectical level. This is because the absolute indeterminacy of the highest level is understood as logically necessary for determination at the lower levels. All determinate attributes which, in less restricted contexts, might serve to distinguish one subject from another (including not only physical features, but also degrees of intelligence, degrees of creativity, etc.) are understood as occurring at lower dialectical levels. Understood as this highest level indeterminacy, subjectivity is logically necessary for the observation (and it will be argued, the volition) of lower level determinations. It is in this sense that the same undifferentiated subjectivity is common to all subjects.

This logical/ontological approach to subjectivity is a further development of Hegel's conception of identity in difference. The universe as a whole is self-identical, undifferentiated universality, which differentiates itself in the form of its particular components, in which it is ultimately contained. As it is contained within me, the universe as a whole is also that which I conceive as my subjectivity. From an Hegelian standpoint, this undifferentiated universality that occupies the higher level may be identified either with subjectivity or substance, that is, the universe as a whole.

In all of these respects, subjectivity serves to illustrate what I shall call the principle of reciprocal universality (RU), which follows from that of self-containment (SC). This principle describes reciprocal relations of universality and particularity between different entities, or between differentiated aspects of the same existent. RU requires that the particular that is contained within the universal is also the

universal which contains, as a particular, that universal within which it is contained. Thus, for example, if a particular book is found to display the universal “red” this can also be reversed such that “book” is the universal for which red books are particulars.

RU is also illustrated by the relationship between philosophy and history, or more generally, theory and practice, as described in the preceding chapter. On the one hand, philosophy’s role is the recognition of contradictions or limitations in any given historical epoch. On the other hand, the limitations of any philosophical overview will be revealed in the course of its application through subsequent historical development. The former is associated with concrete universality produced through the comprehension of particular events within the unity of philosophical self-consciousness, while the latter may be identified with the differentiation of the universal in particular historical events. Thus, on the one hand, historical events are particulars in relation to a universal philosophical overview. On the other hand, the latter is revealed as limited and particularized through its historical application. As illustrated in Hegel’s interpretation of Plato, that philosophical self-consciousness which served as a concrete universality in relation to the preceding historical stage is also an abstract universal which inspires and issues in subsequent historical development.

We have seen that Hegel considers cause and effect as components of a self-contained relationship wherein an effect is conceived as the cause of its cause.⁶² But RU is best illustrated by relations between two subjects. For observer X, observer Y is a determinate object among many others that he perceives at any given time. In other words, X experiences Y as having determinate characteristics and limitations, including a distinct spatiotemporal location, through which Y contrasts with the determinate characteristics and limitations of those other objects that X experiences simultaneously with his experience of Y. In this respect, the experience of X may be considered as the higher level universality in relation to which Y is particularized, determinate and limited. Once again, that which is commonly described as X’s subjectivity is the higher level universality in relation to which Y appears as a particular and determinate object.

At the same time, however, X also appears to Y as a particular object, with determinate characteristics and limitations (including a distinct spatiotemporal position) contrasting with the determinate characteristics and limitations of other objects that Y simultaneously experiences. In this respect, Y’s experience may be conceived as the

higher level universality in relation to which X is particularized and limited.

This condition of RU requires that the experience of each of these observers is the higher level universality in relation to which the other is particularized, or in relation to which the other appears as a determinate and limited object. In accord with the preceding interpretation of self-membership, each is the higher level universality that contains the other as a limited particular, or each is contained within that which it contains. In so far as he experiences the other, each observer is a subject. Each is an object in so far as he is contained as a determinate particular within the experience of the other.

Yet X's experience of Y as an object does not include the direct experience of Y's subjectivity, nor does X's subjectivity ever appear as an immediate object for Y. Rather when Y appears as a determinate object for X, Y's subjectivity remains completely indeterminate in so far as it is never among the particular objects that constitute the immediate experience of X at any particular moment. Similarly, while Y has direct experience of X as a determinate object, Y has no direct experience of X's subjectivity, which therefore remains indeterminate for Y. In so far as X is considered as an individual element within Y's consciousness, the interior of X is understood to be indeterminate for Y, and vice versa. In accord with SC, X's subjectivity may be conceived as occupying this indeterminate interior within which Y is ultimately contained in so far as X is also conscious of Y. Thus Y contains X as an object of consciousness, and X contains (what remains for Y) an indeterminate subjective interior, which reciprocally contains Y as an object of consciousness. In accord with RU, that which contains is also contained within that which it contains. And from an Hegelian standpoint this same undifferentiated universality that operates as the subjectivity of both X and Y is the universe as a whole. It is this same higher level universality that contains the two observers that is also contained within either of them.

RU also may be applied to volitional interaction between the same two subjects. Suppose that X makes an observation of Y, whether visual, audible, tactile, etc. This observation of Y in contrast with other elements of X's experience is X's universality in relation to which Y is particularized. Since Y is a limited particular in relation to X's universality, X is enabled to consider a transcendence of those limitations within which he experiences Y to be constrained; or in other words, X is enabled to consider possibilities for Y's alteration. These possibilities are, to some extent, mutually exclusive in so far as

Y cannot be changed in all ways at once. Hence, X is able to actualize some of the possibilities for Y's alteration only in so far as other possibilities are, at least presently, excluded. The actualization of some of the possibilities for Y's alteration to the exclusion of other possibilities is the essence of X's decision, or act of will. It is what Hegel describes as the "separating judgement" (*Urteil*), in which the undifferentiated universality of X's consciousness (relative to Y) differentiates among possibilities for the determination of Y's experience, and thereby acts to determine Y's experience in one way, in exclusion of other possibilities for Y's alteration by X. In Hegelian terms, X's decision regarding the alternation of Y corresponds to the self-determination/differentiation of the abstract universal in the particular perceptions that Y experiences as a consequence of X's decision.

X's alteration of Y involves the transmission of a signal from X to Y. The reception of this signal by Y corresponds with the determination of Y's universality as a particular in relation to a higher level universality represented by X's subjectivity so that X's subjectivity operates as an indeterminate source of Y's determination. The reception of this signal provides a contrast, and thus a limitation, to Y's preceding universality in so far as it is, for Y, something new or different which therefore contrasts with Y's preceding experience. This might be any ordinary experience – such as the visual perception of the motion of X's arm, or the tactile experience of his touch or anything else that contrasts with Y's experience in the preceding moment. In so far as it contrasts with Y's experience in the preceding moment, Y's preceding experience is now limited or particularized in relation to this new experience.

The limitation of Y's experience in relation to X's act of will is much like the "inconvenience" that Kant observed in reflecting upon subjectivity. As I attempt to reflect upon my own subjectivity, I continuously reduce it to an object in relation to a new and higher level subjectivity. In so far as it is reduced to the status of an object, it is differentiated and determined in relation to other objects at the lower level of consciousness. Similarly, Y's subjectivity is limited, determined and particularized in relation to that which it has previously excluded when Y receives a signal from X. In this respect, X's subjectivity operates as that new and higher level universality in relation to which Y's subjectivity is limited.

Y's subjective universality rises to a new and higher level as he incorporates this limitation of his universality in the preceding

moment, or as he comes to see himself as particularized in relation to X. Y sustains his individuality in so far as he incorporates his diverse thoughts and experiences within the undifferentiated unity of his subjectivity. As a consequence of its limitation in relation to the higher level universality of X, Y's universality is reconstituted at a new and higher level, corresponding with the stage of concrete universality, or individuality, in Hegel's doctrine of the concept.⁶³ Y's new and higher level universality includes X, as X was at the time that X transmitted the signal, as a determinate object. This is to say that with Y's integration of X's signal as a component of his new and higher level universality, Y is enabled to reflect upon possibilities for the alteration of X. Some of these possibilities are actualized through the exclusion of others, and Y's determination of X occurs in the same manner as X's determination of Y. It is this same intersubjective reciprocity, deriving from subjectivity's inherent self-containment that Hegel illustrates in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* through the dialectic of mutual recognition:

Now this movement of self-consciousness in relation to another self-consciousness has in this way been represented as the action of *one* self-consciousness, but this action of the one has itself the double significance of being both its own action and the action of the other as well. For the other is equally independent and self-contained, and there is nothing in it of which it is not itself the origin . . . Each sees the *other* do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the other, and therefore also does what it does only insofar as the other does the same.⁶⁴

In accord with the form of the Idea and the self-containment of self-consciousness, Hegel conceives self-consciousness as a universal which differentiates into the two opposing subjective standpoints: "The middle term is self-consciousness which splits into the extremes; and each extreme is this exchanging of its own determinateness and an absolute transition into the opposite . . . They recognise themselves as *mutually recognising* each other."⁶⁵

– THE ONTOLOGICAL MODEL –

Hegel's paradigm of the "I" presents a model of self-containment derived from his analysis of self-consciousness. On the strength of this model, Hegel identified subjectivity with the universe as a whole and conceived them both as being nothing more than the structure or the method of their own dialectical self-determination. By means of

their self-containment both consciousness and cosmos can be understood as continuously generating their own content, in the manner described throughout the preceding sections.

On this view the whole is understood as the formation-rule⁶⁶ for its parts, and that rule is conceived as SC and its corollary RU. The universe as a whole is necessarily self-contained, since it contains everything and must therefore contain itself. As a consequence of this self-containment it determines itself as its own content throughout the course of its dialectical development. In so far as this structure corresponds with that of self-consciousness and applies to problems in foundational mathematics and physics, it lends support to Hegel's claims regarding the paradigm of the "I". Further in so far as it seems most readily applicable to the interpretation of those revolutionary developments that have occurred in these fields since the turn of the twentieth century, it not only supports the view that this paradigm will be most compatible with advances furthest from the framework of the Enlightenment, but also illustrates the argument of the opening chapter that Hegel's philosophy grasped the contradictions at the core of Western thought and thereby anticipated subsequent intellectual development.

Because the "I" displays the structure of self-containment, it undergoes a process of continuous self-development to consecutively higher dialectical levels. Hence, Hume and Kant were correct in their observation that the subject can never be an object of cognition. Because of its self-containment it invariably transcends its own limitations, such that it can never be merely an object of reflection. Hegel's primary innovation lies in his argument that the method of this development provides the content of consciousness and that it does so by means of the self-determination of consciousness itself.

Hence, consciousness acquires an ontological role in Hegelian philosophy. This is consistent with Hegel's identification of subjectivity with substance and of the individual with the totality, as well as with his assertion that the method of cognition is also the structure of reality. This method, which is at once substantial and subjective, this formation-rule conceived as the pattern for the development of its own content, is designated by Hegel as the Absolute Idea. It is the form for determination of the content of both consciousness and cosmos. The content of the Absolute Idea is, then, the self-conscious recognition of the dialectical method by which the contents of consciousness and cosmos are continuously generated. "Thus," says Hegel, "the logical Idea has itself as infinite form for content,

– form which is the opposite of content in so far as the latter is the form-determination which has passed into itself and in identity has transcended itself . . . The Absolute Idea itself has only this further content, that the form-determination is its own perfected totality – the pure Concept . . .”⁶⁷

This point has been overlooked by those commentators from Marx onward who have sought to cap the Hegelian dialectic with some sort of terminal stage or historical climax. They have missed the significance of passages such as that at the end of the first part of the *Encyclopedia*, where Hegel describes the Idea in terms of self-contradiction, and then declares that

The idea itself is the dialectic which forever divides and distinguishes the self-identical from the differentiated, the subjective from the objective, the finite from the infinite . . . Only on these terms is it an eternal creation, eternal vitality, and eternal spirit.⁶⁸

Hegel’s doctrine of the Absolute Idea requires that the dialectic should culminate not in the termination of its dialectical development but in the self-conscious recognition of the method by which the dialectic necessarily continues. Hegel describes the content of this knowledge as “infinite form” because it is the “formation-rule” for all the infinite contents that are determined throughout the endless course of its movement. Since the Absolute is the formation process of subjects and objects, Absolute Knowledge is a philosophical comprehension of the formation process, and not the empirical knowledge of every one of its products. In accord with the preceding interpretation, this insight involves a comprehension of the structure of self-containment that underlies the development of both consciousness and cosmos. Both are usefully modelled as classes that include themselves as members, and as Russell concluded about such classes, they can have “no total”. Well in advance of Gödel, Hegel recognized that a logical system must be either self-contradictory or open-ended, and conceived of a self-referential, self-contradictory, logical totality, which self-contradiction was continuously resolved in so far as it impelled the continuous development of the system. The dialectic has neither termination nor total because it derives from the necessary structure of self-containment and thereby continuously generates its own content. Since there is, consequently, neither the possibility nor the need for a catalogue of all the particular products of the dialectic Hegel remarks, “What remains therefore to be

considered here is not a content as such, but the universal element of its form – that is, the method.”⁶⁹ This method, he explains, is the self-determination of the concept.

Accordingly, what must now be considered as method is no more than the movement of the Concept itself, whose nature has already been understood. This meaning, however, is now added, that the Concept is everything and that its movement is the universal and absolute activity, the self-determining and self-realising movement.⁷⁰

Hegel describes the Absolute Idea as the method of its own dialectical development, and he describes this method as that of self-contained universality which is at once “internal” and “external”, and “which finds itself in everything”.⁷¹ It is also described as being at once “soul” and “substance”, both the general form of cognition and also the objective manner of the substantiality of things.⁷² “The method,” as Hegel says, “is this knowledge of itself, and for this knowledge the Concept is not only as object, but is its own peculiar and subjective activity, or the instrument and means of cognitive activity, distinct from it, but as its own peculiar essentiality.”⁷³ Thus the Absolute Idea is the self-conscious recognition of the method by which subjectivity develops, or it is self-consciousness of the structure of self-consciousness. It is consciousness which knows itself as an activity of differentiation and self-determination, or it is consciousness which recognizes its contents as its self, since

there is in it no transition, or presupposition, and in general no specific character other than what is fluid and transparent, the Absolute Idea is for itself the pure form of the Concept, which contemplates its contents as its own self. It is its own content, insofar as it ideally distinguishes itself from itself, and *the one of the two things distinguished is a self-identity in which however is contained the totality of the form as the system of terms describing its content*. This content is the system of Logic. All that is at this stage left as form for the idea is the Method of this content . . .⁷⁴

Here again, Hegel describes the Absolute Idea in terms of its identity in difference or its self-containment. In its act of self-diremption it becomes a particular element of its own content in distinction from other elements; yet even as a part it contains the totality. Its content, Hegel says, is his own dialectical logic.

Hegel’s logic is significant in this context because it culminates in, and develops out of, this self-contained totality that he describes as

the Absolute Idea. It is able to accommodate this totality and describe its development because, as Russell acknowledged, it treats contradiction in a manner contrary to that of standard logic. Yet much as Russell otherwise misconstrued Hegel's conception of absolute knowing,⁷⁵ so the assumptions of standard logic confuse the whole with the parts, thereby committing the fallacy of composition. The fact that no part can be a combination of contradictory values does not mean that the whole cannot be a combination of contradictory values. Whereas the laws of standard logic apply to the parts, they do not apply to the universal totality; and though they apply to the objects of consciousness, they do not apply to subjectivity itself. In order to understand either consciousness or the universe as a whole, it is necessary to modify the traditional assumptions of logic in order to allow contradiction an active role in the determination of content.

Along with the appendix, the preceding discussion has sought to show that an application of this approach to the antinomies results in a solution that is unavailable to any approach based upon standard logic. Hegel's dialectical logic differs from standard logic initially in that it accepts a self-contradictory totality as the common basis for logic and ontology. The Hegelian approach begins with the recognition of this fundamental contradiction and develops as its implications are explored. The dialectical method is nothing more than a simple theory of types which Hegel understands as developing from out of this contradiction.

Yet whereas Russell formulated the theory of types to rescue standard logic from the paradox of self-reference, Hegel described his logic as thought thinking about itself. By founding his philosophical system upon self-reference Hegel made a virtue of that logical necessity that Russell in any case seemed unable to avoid. For if paradox is to be successfully evaded, then Russell's theory of types must eliminate self-reference from all logical expression. Yet since the theory of types is itself a logical expression Russell's application violates its own restriction on self-reference.

On the other hand, a self-referential, self-contained hierarchy, such as that which has been outlined in the preceding sections along with the appendix, not only supplies an unrestricted resolution of the logical antinomies but also provides a model applicable to cosmos and consciousness alike. Hence, Hegel's logic is also self-containing in the sense that it accommodates the mind of the logician within which it occurs. It is a model in accord with Hegel's conception of logic as arising from an absolute self-contained, self-contradictory totality,

and proceeding through the development of a dialectical hierarchy in a manner he describes as thought thinking itself. It is in every sense a realization of the structure of self-consciousness.

The preceding discussion has modelled subjectivity in terms of the universal class and applied that model not only to consciousness but to the universe as a whole. Before moving on, it will be helpful to summarize the results of this chapter within a concise model that may be broadly applied to the topics in Hegelian philosophy and contemporary political theory. The ontological model (OM) is based upon the principle of self-containment (SC), and its corollary principle of reciprocal universality (RU). OM, SC and RU may be used to describe any self-contained system, whether abstract or empirical. They acquire broad applicability through their derivation from an interpretation of the universal class. Since the set of everything includes everything, whether abstract or empirical, there is a sense in which it transcends traditional epistemological dualism, such that philosophers traditionally have associated it with the physical universe considered as a whole. Hence, SC and RU may be used to describe relations between abstract entities, or between empirical events, or between abstract entities and empirical events; and OM follows Hegel in his rejection of the conventional distinction between subjectivity and substance.

While OM may be used to describe both consciousness and cosmos in terms of their self-referentiality, OM itself is also self-referential in that it too may be conceived in terms of its principles of SC and RU. The subsequent discussion will attempt to show that OM may be considered as a meta-metaphilosophy in that it describes the relation of one philosophy to another throughout the history of philosophy. In so far as OM describes the method by which the history of philosophy develops, OM may be conceived as the class of all philosophies, where, once again, a class is understood as a rule for the determination of its members. But if OM is considered as the class of all philosophies, then in so far as OM itself is a philosophy, OM may be conceived on the model of a class that includes itself as a member. In accord with SC, OM then may be conceived as generating the dialectical process that characterizes the history of philosophy, whereby it expresses itself in the form of all of those particular philosophies that are produced in the course of this development.

Moreover, as illustrated in the structure of this book, OM is understood to be expressed in the hermeneutic reciprocity of Hegel's philosophy and dramatic intellectual developments of the late

nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The hermeneutic is reciprocal in that Hegel's philosophy is interpreted in terms of subsequent intellectual developments, while those same developments are interpreted in terms of Hegelian philosophy. Thus contemporary science and mathematics may be understood as providing Hegelian philosophy with clarity, precision and plausibility, while the latter provides the ontological foundation that contemporary scientists increasingly have required, even as it has been relinquished by contemporary philosophers.

While Hegel sometimes disparaged the more prosaic practices of scientists and mathematicians in his own time, we can only speculate how he might have responded to the revolutionary developments that have occurred in those fields since the turn of the twentieth century.⁷⁶ Yet any such speculation would seem to miss the point of Hegel's observation that, with its passage to each new generation, the past philosophical "legacy is degraded to a material which becomes metamorphosed by Mind. In this manner that which is received is changed, and the material worked upon is both enriched and preserved at the same time".⁷⁷ The issue is less how Hegel might have viewed subsequent intellectual developments than how his views help us to understand them.

And reciprocally, it is about how these developments help us to understand Hegel. Having reconsidered Hegel's metaphilosophy in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 has applied the result to an interpretation of contemporary intellectual developments in order to derive a model of self-containment. The reciprocity of this hermeneutic is illustrated further in the following chapters through the application of OM toward a reinterpretation of Hegel's history of philosophy, philosophy of history and political philosophy. In the final chapter, this reciprocity is extended through an application of Hegel's reinterpreted political philosophy to aspects of the recent liberal/communitarian debate.

In so far as this dual hermeneutic illustrates RU it serves to support the contention in the first chapter that Hegel grasped key contradictions at the core of Western thought and thereby anticipated subsequent intellectual development. For in so far as Hegel's philosophy comprehends limitations in the preceding tradition, it may be conceived in terms of OM as rising, with respect to that tradition, to a new and higher level of concrete universality. But if this is the case then RU would suggest that limitations in Hegel's philosophy should also be revealed through subsequent intellectual development, and, more precisely, that the specific directions of this subsequent

development should help us to separate what is significant from what is insignificant in Hegel's philosophy, at least for the purposes of the present age.

Moreover, in so far as RU applies to the relationship between Hegel's philosophy and subsequent intellectual development, the form of this book serves to illustrate SC. For in so far as it grasped the inherent contradictions, and anticipated subsequent development, of the Western tradition of thought, Hegel's philosophy both contains and is contained within that tradition. But this might be expected given the interpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy in Chapter 1 and his conception of self-consciousness in the present chapter. The history of thought reflects the self-containment of consciousness as developed through the reciprocity of theory and praxis. It is the contradiction inherent in this self-containment that has driven the dialectic of Western thought and the advancement of Western civilization. Hence, the following chapters trace the legacy of contradiction in Western thought and culture to which Hegel understood his philosophy to respond. On his analysis, these contradictions sprang initially from the Greek discovery of self-consciousness and subjective freedom, and from the seminal separation of subject and object which followed from the pioneering development of deductive logic in Eleatic thought.

– NOTES –

1. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 7.
2. Hinchman, *Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment*, p. 7.
3. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 217.
4. Hume, D., *A Treatise of Human Nature (Appendix)*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 634.
5. Ibid., p. 585; See Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, p. 517–18.
6. Kant, *What Real Progress has Metaphysics Made in Germany Since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?*, p. 73.
7. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, pp. 418–19.
8. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §413, p. 153.
9. Hegel, *Logic*, §15.
10. Cantor, "Contributions to the founding of the theory of transfinite numbers".
11. Curry, *Foundations of Mathematical Logic*, pp. 3–4.
12. Begun in the year 1900 *Principia Mathematica* was originally published in 1910.
13. Russell and Whitehead, p. 37.
14. Dedekind, "The nature and meaning of numbers", *Essays on the Theory of Numbers*, §66, p. 64.
15. For purposes of this discussion it will not be necessary to consider a ramified theory of types.

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16. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1937, pp. 362, 527.
 17. Cited by Waisman, *Introduction to Mathematical Thinking*, p. 73.
 18. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, pp. 362, 527–8, 528.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 528.
 20. Tarski, *Logic, Semantics, Metamathematics*, p. 215.
 21. Russell and Whitehead, p. 37.
 22. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 105.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 362.
 24. Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, pp. 136–7.
 25. Quine, *The Ways of Paradox*, p. 16.
 26. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, p. 714.
 27. Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, §33.
 28. Dummett, M., *Frege's Philosophy of Mathematics*, p. 85.
 29. Frege, G., "A critical elucidation of some points in E. Schröder, *Vorlesungen über die Algebra der Logik*", in Gottlob Frege, *Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy*, p. 228.
 30. Dummett, M., *Frege's Philosophy of Mathematics*, p. 92.
 31. *Ibid.*, pp. 211–13.
 32. Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic*, §51.
 33. *Ibid.*, §49.
 34. Once again, Frege understood a concept to precede its extension. Nevertheless, he also provided a heuristic discussion of abstraction as a process of concept formation. The reader may refer to notes 27 and 28 above.
 35. Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, §33.
 36. Carnap, *Introduction to Symbolic Logic and Its Applications*, p. 17.
 37. Russell and Whitehead, *Principia Mathematica*, p. 188. It does not appear that the authors make further use of this notation.
 38. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 233.
 39. Hegel, *Logic*, §163.
 40. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 240.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 234–5.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
 46. Cantor, "Contributions to the founding of the theory of transfinite numbers".
 47. Russell and Whitehead, *Principia Mathematica*, pp. 37–8.
 48. Rucker, *Geometry, Relativity and the Fourth Dimension*, p. 105.
 49. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
 51. Clifford, W., Cambridge University lecture, 1870. See *Ibid.*, p. 114.
 52. Wheeler, *Gravitation* (last chapter).
 53. Rucker, *Geometry, Relativity and the Fourth Dimension*, p. 114.
 54. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
 55. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 28 (emphasis added).
 56. See Chapter 5.
 57. Rosen, "The anthropic principle II", *American Journal of Physics*, (56), n. 5, May 1988, 417–18.

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58. "Is the Universe a Vacuum Fluctuation?", *Nature*, (246), 14 December 1973, 396-7.
59. Misner, Thorne and Wheeler, *Gravitation*, p. 1194; and personal conversations: London, 10 January 1995; Princeton University, 14 March 1995; and Netherfield, Battle, England, 26 May 1995.
60. Chew, "'Bootstrap': a scientific idea?", *Science* (v), 161, 23 May 1968, 762-5. "Hadron Bootstrap: triumph or frustration?", *Physics Today*, (23) 10/70, 23-8. "Impasse for the elementary particle concept", in Benton, *The Great Ideas of Today*.
61. Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, p. 172; see pp. 149, 177, 184-8; and personal conversation, Birkbeck College, April 1987.
62. Hegel, *Logic*, §154
63. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 235.
64. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 111.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
66. Rosen, G. W. F. *Hegel*, pp. 39-40.
67. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 467.
68. Hegel, *Logic*, §214.
69. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 467.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 468-9.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 469.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 468-9.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 469.
74. Hegel, *Logic*, §237.
75. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, p. 714.
76. Indeed, it is likely that Hegel would have been gratified to learn that scientific developments since his time have vindicated certain fundamental tenets of his ontology, and he would surely have been quick to incorporate these developments into his philosophy of nature, for as he wrote in the work which has come to bear that name: "Not only must philosophy be in agreement with our empirical knowledge of Nature, but the *origin* and formation of the Philosophy of Nature presupposes and is conditioned by empirical physics." (p. 6, see p. 10) Hegel's philosophy may be viewed as an attempt to transcend the physics of his day toward a science that might be compared with the quantum mechanics of our own age. Hegel's objections, as voiced in his *Encyclopedia*, as well as in remarks scattered throughout his system, are directed, not against empirical science *per se*, but against the atomism, mechanism, abstract materialism and (what Hegel believed to be) the conceptual poverty of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century science. Hegel's objections to the mechanistic materialism of his own day, therefore, do not guarantee that he would also have rejected contemporary physics, and would seem to imply the opposite in so far as twentieth-century physics has involved the explicit rejection of the assumptions fundamental to the development of seventeenth-century science.
77. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 3.

Community and Cosmology in Ancient Greece

The preceding chapter modelled the role of contradiction in the development of self-consciousness. The present discussion traces Hegel's account of the origins of modern self-consciousness to certain elementary contradictions that were lodged within the Greek foundations of Western thought, contradictions which first appeared in a philosophical context, and which eventually undermined the cultural life of the polis. Hegel contends that these were a source of fragmentation within a simple form of life "based upon a notion of substantial, still undivided unity, a unity which was not yet come to inner differentiation."¹ He chooses aesthetic terms² to describe its graceful integration of cosmos and community with a consciousness which was not yet self-consciousness, but which would come to recognize its own significance as it surrendered its unreflective harmony to the development of these contradictions.

Hegel begins his study of Greek philosophy with the Milesian School, Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes, which sprang up in the wealthy Greek cities of Western Asia. The democratic orders of these cities served to inspire the natural philosophies that developed within them. McNeill has argued that the modern notion of scientific law began with the sixth-century projection of political laws upon the universe as a whole. "The beginnings of Greek philosophy," he writes, "may be viewed as a naive but enormously fruitful projection upon the cosmos of the busy ordered world of the polis."³

The view of the Milesian philosophers also reflected early Greek hylozoism in that it conceived of the universe as a living, self-moving being. As a consequence, these early thinkers could see no problem in accounting either for the origin of motion and change or for their presence in material objects. They did not distinguish mechanical change from organic growth, nor was there any conception of

material being which was separable from its own inner principle of motion and development. The universe as a whole and all its parts were understood to be alive.

For the Pythagoreans, the universe was yet more explicitly a process of development which was thought to have begun from a unitary seed. The development out of this fiery germ was based on the activity of limitation, and occurred according to a dynamic pattern or structure. The world was said to be the active imposition of limit (*peras*) on the unlimited (*apeiron*) to produce the limited (*peperasenon*). Through this process of limitation, the universe was thought to expand or articulate itself outward into the unlimited. In accord with his own doctrine of the concept, Hegel interprets this process as involving an original unity that divides itself into opposing particulars, and that subsequently returns to unity through the reciprocal limitation that these opposites provide to each other (that is, through the way that each of these opposites refers to the other), as well as through the philosophical self-consciousness of the individual.⁴ According to the Pythagoreans, this same activity of limitation is observable in daily life: night limits day and hot limits cold in such a way that each of the opposites constitutes the other or provides the other with structure and content. Each exists only through its contrast or relation with the other.

Because the universe was seen to exhibit this kind of organization the Pythagoreans understood it to be a living organism.⁵ Life is a process of ordered growth, and this perfectly describes the Pythagorean notion of the universe. It is said that Pythagoras was the first to call the world *kosmos* in view of the manner in which it is ordered according to its own process of self-limitation or self-determination. Not only is the *kosmos* as a whole self-determining but within the *kosmos* corporeal bodies are possessed of an inner principle of self-motion which is their soul.

Just as the universe is a *kosmos*, a dynamically ordered whole, so Pythagoras believed that each individual is a *kosmos* in miniature.⁶ We are organisms that reproduce the structural principles of the macrocosm. Likewise, the divine mind, which is embodied in the order of the universe, is identical with the structure of our own minds and is represented in the form of our cognitive processes. By studying the structural principles of the universe, we develop these elements in ourselves.⁷ For the universal genius of Pythagoras, religion and science were two aspects of the same integrated world view, and ethical considerations reflected the order of the physical world.⁸

Though Hegel looks with approval on much of Pythagorean philosophy, his own lengthy discussion ends with a critical citation from Aristotle: "If only the limited and the unlimited, the even and odd are made fundamental ideas, the Pythagoreans do not explain how movement arises, and how, without movement and change there can be coming into being and passing away, or the conditions and activities of heavenly objects."⁹ As with the Milesians, the Pythagoreans do not succeed in providing an adequate account of the origin and nature of motion and change. In all sixth-century *Weltanschauungen*, these terms are simply assumed without an explanation. In Hegelian terms, there is no description of the determination of experience from out of some deeper or encompassing universality, such as that of Hegel's doctrine of the concept. As Hegel concludes, "This defect is significant."¹⁰

Hegel regards later Ionian philosophy as providing a partial response to this problem since "Heraclitus at least understands the absolute as just this process of the dialectic."¹¹ As a consequence of its inherent dynamism, the world of Heraclitus was one in a more complete sense than it was for Parmenides. In attempting to describe the universe as a single, static monolith, Parmenides banished motion, change and multiplicity, thereby establishing a sharp and persistent dualism. For Heraclitus, however, the universe involved a unity which was understood not in terms of a petrified tranquillity, but in terms of a unitary process in which opposites cohered as moments within the encompassing movement of the whole.

From a common premise concerning the contradictory nature of change, Parmenides concluded that change is impossible, while Heraclitus contended that contradiction (the unity of opposites) is the foundation of existence, and whereas Parmenidean philosophy had established a strict dichotomy between being and non-being, existence and negation, Heraclitus unified these in his dynamic notion of the world as becoming. Because every phase and form of being undergoes negation and passes on to another phase, we must come to understand the world in terms of process or change. This universal process involves the essential combination of being and negation, in that every existent is negated in such a way as to yield a different form of being. Thus we could say that every particular existent is produced through negation, and since every form of being is produced in this way, contradiction lies at the base of existence. The Heraclitean conception of reality as a process of unity and opposition is, for Hegel, an early anticipation of the Idea.

Hegel's own interpretation is, in certain respects, complimented by

Guthrie's conclusion that Heraclitus conceived of universal mind in the form of cosmic fire. As with the Pythagoreans, the underlying dynamism of the world was an exhibition of this divine mind which was also reflected in the structure of human cognition. This did not mean, either for Heraclitus or the Pythagoreans, that man was created in the image of God, but rather that the ordered progression of thought was continuous with the dynamism of the universe as a whole, so that the whole is contained and reproduced in each of its parts. "All things," according to Heraclitus, "come out of the one, and the one out of all things."

— CONTRADICTION AND SELF-REFERENCE — IN PARMENIDEAN THOUGHT

Certain aspects of Ionian and Pythagorean philosophy have been retained within the Western tradition of thought, but their overall outlook is alien to our own. Their influence has been far overshadowed by that of Parmenides of Elea who established a strict dichotomy between motion and change, on the one hand, and eternal reality, on the other. This he did through his conception of the universe as a great solid, homogeneous "sphere" in which change and motion were absolutely impossible. Although there was, to be sure, the superficial appearance of change, Parmenides argued that this had nothing to do with the true perfection of reality.

Parmenides set himself in direct opposition to the approach and general principles of those cosmogonies that preceded his own. Beyond its transparent rejection of Heraclitus, various scholars have read his work as an attack on Anaximander, Anaximenes and the Pythagorean school. All of these thinkers had begun by assuming the reality of change. The counter-position adopted by Parmenides was equally damaging to all of these theories since it dismissed all motion, change and difference as illusory.

Additionally, while the Heraclitean description of reality emphasized paradox and the contradictory nature of reality, Parmenidean philosophy relied upon an unprecedented exercise in logical deduction based on the principle of non-contradiction. Parmenides proceeded entirely through reasoning, unaided by induction or any form of sensory input, to deduce what he held to be the true nature of being. All of this took place in a dramatic poem, involving metaphorical travel and conversations with a goddess. The poem was divided into two parts: "The Way of Truth" and "The Way of

Seeming". It was in the first section, "The Way of Truth", that Parmenides depicted reality as solid, static, homogeneous and eternal. In the "Way of Seeming" he described the transient world of appearance. Between these two accounts there was a notorious gap, which has been of great consequence for the history of Western thought.

Yet in terms of OM, Parmenides' undifferentiated reality might be understood to correspond with the undifferentiated universality at the higher level which is subsequently limited and differentiated in the lower level world of experience. From an Hegelian standpoint, it is the self-containment of this abstract universality that leads to its self-differentiation among dialectical levels and its self-determination among particulars at the lower level. Thus, the failure of Parmenides to bridge the gap between the way of seeming and the way of truth may be attributed to his deductive method which preceded standard logic in upholding the law of identity, denying contradiction, and (as we shall see) ultimately exposing itself to the paradox of self-reference.

According to Parmenides, the object of thought must exist, for it is possible to think of something, and since the object of thought cannot be nothing, nothing is non-existent. It has been said that Parmenides argued that it is impossible to speak of nothing, broke his own rule in the act, and deduced himself into a world where it was all that ever happened. Yet at the time that Parmenides presented this argument it appeared to be irrefutable, and strange consequences followed. Motion, change and multiplicity were thought to be unreal since they involve what is becoming what is not. Parmenides argued that change is contradictory since it requires that some determinate attribute must pass into or out of existence and therefore must have both being and non-being.

Hence, the law of identity did not enable Parmenides to explain precisely how motion, change and multiplicity were related to the static, homogeneous nature of reality, and indeed he contended that there was an impassable gulf between them. Parmenides thereby presented the dichotomy that has since provided the Western tradition with its characteristic structure; a dualism that has been repeatedly modified and reproduced throughout the subsequent history of philosophy; a dichotomy with which virtually every major European thinker has subsequently struggled. The fundamental influence of Parmenidean philosophy is reflected in Hegel's conclusion that "Parmenides began Philosophy proper."¹²

Whereas those philosophies that preceded Parmenides had considered opposition as producing the dynamism, coherence and

unity of the whole, Parmenides argued influentially that opposites must be strictly separated. As a consequence, the relation of change and motion to conceptions of either an ultimate or material reality became explicitly and chronically problematic. Motion, change, spirit and mind were directly opposed to reality as in the case of the Platonic forms, or to material substance as in Descartes. And as the same dichotomy presented itself in slightly different forms, mind was opposed to matter or to body, reason to passion, spirit to nature, force to matter and subjective perception to the objective world. The result, as Hegel observes, was a set of chronic problems surrounding the determination of the particular from out of the universal.

In all these different forms which are quite familiar to us, there is the same difficult question which exists in reference to the Eleatic thought. Whence comes determination and how is it to be grasped · how is it in the one, leaving the finite aside, and also how does the infinite pass out into the finite? . . . as Being was presupposed, change in itself is contradictory and inconceivable.¹³

Few of Parmenides' successors located motion, change and spirit within material objects or considered them as the underlying principles of reality. Indeed, the modern view of the universe as a senseless mechanism composed of dead material objects betrays the seminal influence of his thought.

All preceding philosophers had seen change as an objective phenomenon. However, in its rejection by Parmenides, change is equated with non-existence or Nothing. Because they are thought to be illusory, change and negation (non-existence) are thus associated with empirical error. They are little more than a confusion resulting from our subjective perception of the world. For Hegel, this assertion established a profound opposition between appearance and reality which was reproduced again and again, throughout a series of dualisms that developed gradually toward his own reintegration of change with reality and subjectivity with objectivity.

After Parmenides, there is a shift in Greek thought toward previously unrecognized epistemological problems. For Parmenides himself being and thought were one since reality was accessible only by way of reason. Yet the dichotomy he established between reality and perception was only a step away from that of reality and cognition. Once reality had been equated with cognition, it became

necessary to examine the nature of thought itself and to inquire as to precisely how it is possible for thought to reflect reality.

According to Parmenides, reality is static and unchanging. But we know it is so only because we know that reality must conform to the requirements of rational thought, and rational thought involves an activity or process of development such as that, for example, which Parmenides illustrated in the form of his own argument. Thus Parmenides' deduction falls into the paradox of self-reference in so far as its development or form is a negation of its content, and Parmenides cannot prove his point without refuting it. Because the Parmenidean notion of reality is dependent upon cognitive requirements, it presupposes an active, developing process, and the equation of this active process with a static, immutable reality is the contradiction implicit in Parmenidean philosophy, a contradiction that arguably could not be resolved until reality was finally understood in terms of that same self-contained structure that forms a basis for cognition.

It was this unrecognized contradiction that lay at the base of the arguments in fourth- and fifth-century Greece about the problems of knowledge, as well as those about the reality and nature of motion, change and difference. This long-running classical debate reproduced the original Parmenidean dichotomy in an expanding series of forms. But it was not until the rise of modern philosophy that these could be generalized in such a way as to arrive at the opposition hidden at the very foundation of the Eleatic view, namely that between an active (subjective) rationality and a static (objective) reality.

On Hegel's view, the Parmenidean separation of reality from subjective perception, change and negation is the beginning of the dichotomy that would develop itself throughout the dialectic of Western philosophy. Once motion and change have been assigned to subjectivity, "existence becomes the unmoved. We here find the beginning of the dialectic."¹⁴ According to Hegel, the development of Western thought properly begins with the polarity of a static, objective Being, on one side, and a subjective Nothing on the other.¹⁵ By cleaving to this principle of identity and denying the reality of contradiction, Hegel understands Parmenides to have established a problematic which would unfold itself throughout the tradition of Western thought.¹⁶

Prior to Parmenides thought did not reflect upon itself in distinction from the world, but thought first became conscious of its own universality when Parmenides demonstrated the inadequacies or

limitations of experience in relation to rational truths. Before Parmenides, other philosophers sought principles of universality in the world of experience (for example, Thales' conclusion that everything is water), but they failed to recognize the universality of thought itself. Parmenides' conception of rational cognition as a principle of universality shattered the preceding identity of thought and experience and thereby initiated the millennial dialectic of Western intellectual development. Prior to Parmenides the thinking individual conceived himself implicitly as a particular contained within the phenomenal world. He did not understand his thought as a universal in relation to which the phenomenal world also was particularized. In terms of OM, thought conceived itself only as contained within the world, and did not realize that it was also that within which the world was contained. But with the rise of Eleatic philosophy the thinking subject served as an incipient illustration of SC in so far as he began to recognize himself as containing that within which he was contained. Thus, if consciousness is defined as the class of all objects of which I am conscious, then in so far as Parmenides focused thought upon itself consciousness became conscious of itself and this class came to include itself as a member. It is therefore ironic that the paradox of self-referentiality, when recognized by Russell after twenty-five hundred years, would challenge the deductive logic that Parmenides pioneered.

– SUBJECTIVISM IN THE ELEATIC AFTERMATH –

But paradox appeared initially on behalf of the Eleatic approach. In the riddles of Zeno, far more effectively than Parmenidean metre, rational reflection demonstrated the limits of experience, and consciousness considered itself as an object of analysis and criticism. Hegel understood Zeno as the first to formulate clearly the contradictions implicit in the Eleatic dichotomy, and thereby to focus upon questions of reality and change that would challenge Western thought throughout its long development. Consequently, Zeno's mode of presentation was also the first to embody the true spirit of the dialectic, since, unlike its predecessors, it raised the paradoxes inherent in an established world view, rather than merely asserting an alternative position.¹⁷

Yet while Hegel credits Zeno as the first to recognize that motion, change and difference must be conceived in terms of contradiction, he nevertheless contends that Zeno's version of the dialectic remained

abstractly subjective. Zeno, like Parmenides, saw this contradiction as ultimately illusory and as simply occurring within subjective consciousness. Hence, a full exploration of the issues Zeno raised would (with a dialectical irony that Zeno might have appreciated) depend upon the gradual development and of contradictions in the Eleatic position itself.

Partly through the force of Zeno's arguments, the Eleatic approach came to have an influence on the development of Western thought which eclipsed that of competing world views. In the period that followed, Greek philosophers struggled to resolve the logical force of the Parmenidean position with the changing world of sense perception. The pluralists, for example, attempted to bridge this gap by retaining the Parmenidean notion of imperishable substance while positing a multiplicity of substantial entities, which could then be combined in different ways to allow for change.¹⁸

Generally this period was characterized by a series of attempts to reduce all phenomena to universal principles which were conceived as applying beneath the phenomenal level and which were therefore available to thought alone. Classes of phenomenal events were encompassed within universal categories expressed as natural laws and principles. Thought, in other words, consolidated its post-Parmenidean status as the universality in relation to which the multifaceted phenomenal world is differentiated, and within which it is contained.¹⁹

Given the pluralist suggestion that all phenomena could be classed under noumenal categories and principles, it is a short step to Anaxagoras' assertion of the primacy of *nous*.²⁰ Hegel considers this insight important to the awakening of subjective freedom in ancient Greece, and in the subsequent assertion of individualist values against the collective universality of the polis. "The basis of this principle of subjectivity," says Hegel, "we now see in Anaxagoras."²¹

It is significant that the world does not become fully "objective" until after the principle of subjectivity has been abstracted from it, just as it does not become strictly material until after it has been separated from an inherent dynamic principle. The earliest Greeks had conceived of the universe as living and self-moving, and for many of these thinkers it betrayed the order and the impulse of an encompassing cosmic intelligence. Distinctions between subjectivity and objectivity or matter and motion would have been virtually meaningless to them. It was only after Parmenides that distinctions like this could be made, and that it became possible to describe the world mechanistically. In this sense, the pluralists may be seen as a

prototype for all subsequent mechanistic philosophies in that they conceived of matter as lifeless and static apart from unexplained forces that were externally applied. Since matter no longer moved on its own account, it was necessary that it should be forced from the outside.

Even before the time that Anaxagoras joined Pericles in Athens, this new mechanistic world view had begun to have an impact upon the political and religious ideas that were the mortar of Greek cultural life. The challenge that this view presented and the changes that it produced in traditional Greek ideas eventually resulted in the further extension of a mode of thought which, at its base, was fundamentally Eleatic. From this point on, we will trace the development of this approach through an expanding fragmentation of Greek cultural life. Beginning from the dichotomy of subjective perception and universal reality implicit in Parmenidean thought, this opposition will be reproduced in an increasingly wide range of dualisms, each of which occurs in response to the conceptual limitations, and often in response to the cultural diremption, resulting from the preceding forms of this dichotomy.

Hence, in surveying Hegel's understanding of the history of philosophy, we will be following a kind of dialectic that begins from the self-referential contradiction implicit in Parmenidean philosophy and develops itself through a series of oppositions, each of which attempts to respond to the contradictions inherent in the preceding forms of this polarity. We have seen that in attempting to reconcile the contradiction implicit in Parmenidean philosophy, the pluralists developed an abstract, mechanistic physical science, divorced from the realm of human experience. This mechanistic approach eventually worked to undermine the unreflective naturalism that served as the foundation for traditional Greek religious and political views. Yet in their reaction against this new natural science, the Sophists none the less grounded their attack on the same Eleatic dichotomy (subjective perception, or "seeming", versus universal reality, or "truth") that had inspired the speculation of the pluralists. The result was the further development and proliferation of this dichotomy in new forms, culminating in an increasing polarization of the Greek mind between the competing claims of the new mechanism and subjectivism, on the one hand, and the traditional notions of natural universality on the other.

With these changes, it became possible, for the first time, to consider social and political problems apart from the requirements

of an encompassing *Weltanschauung*. Just as the first mechanistic philosophies created the possibility of a purely physical explanation of the world, so they also raised the possibility of a distinctly humanist philosophical perspective, and indeed, once the natural world had been characterized in purely physical (or mechanistic) terms, a strictly social philosophy became something of a necessity.

For the Homeric Greeks, for Heraclitus, for the Milesians and especially for the Pythagoreans, there could have been no meaningful distinction between these realms of inquiry. The Ionians saw the universe as structured according to a process of balancing between opposing principles, and this was the same process of cosmic justice that manifested itself in the opposition and accommodation of human communal life. It would have made no sense to these thinkers to consider human relations in abstraction from all of the other relations of the universe. This was even more explicitly the case with the Pythagoreans, who organized their daily lives according to the orderly principles of the cosmos. For the early Greeks, human beings were integral parts of the universe and the principles of cosmic structure were reflected in human relations. In studying the nature of human interaction one studied the nature of the cosmos, and vice versa.

With the development of the Eleatic view, this was no longer possible. In either the static dualism of Parmenides or the mechanistic pluralism of the atomists, the common man found himself abandoned to a reality which was homogeneous, tasteless, odourless and totally divorced from the realm of human experience. Once the study of the universe had refined itself to descriptions that were fundamentally independent of the phenomenal world, it began to appear that human relations must require a separate theoretical perspective which denied the relevance of cosmological considerations to moral and political issues, while adapting the mechanist influence toward a purely technical approach.

This conception of a phenomenal world particularized and limited in relation to the newly discovered universality of thought licensed the manipulative approach of the Sophists. In other words, the Sophists developed the political implications of those conclusions regarding the universality of subjectivity at which the natural philosophers had already arrived. Hence the popularity of the Sophists in the second half of the fifth century may be seen both as a natural result of the rising mechanistic world view, and as a reaction against it. In the second case no less than the first, however, it must be seen as

ultimately providing for the further articulation of the Eleatic perspective throughout the cultural life of Greece. As Hegel remarks, "A chief part of their [the Sophists] culture was the generalisation of the Eleatic mode of thought and its extension to the whole content of knowledge and action."²²

As formulated by the Sophists, this humanist reaction was implicitly grounded upon the Eleatic and pluralist rejection of traditional cosmological views. It nevertheless occurred as a revolt against the Eleatic tradition which had denied the reality of the phenomenal world, as well as against the mechanistic views of the pluralists who had ignored the subjective and self-determining element in their approach to reality.²³ It consequently drew much of its appeal from the intuitive distaste of many Greeks for the new mechanistic description of reality. It offered to rescue the animate and subjective aspects of the world, but it did so only by sharply abstracting subjectivity from a reality that remained physical and flatly objective. The result was a sceptical relativism that despaired of the possibility of any form of absolute knowledge, and hence, of all universal values and standards.²⁴ Moral and political actions could no longer be grounded in a traditional order, and were consequently abandoned to increasingly subjective considerations, tending toward technical manipulation. Questions of justice and injustice, for example, which were once referred to the dictates of an encompassing metaphysical order, were now considered as merely subjective or conventional. As Hegel observes

It was the Sophists . . . who first introduced subjective reflection, and the new doctrine that each man should act according to his own conviction. When reflection once comes into play, the inquiry is started whether the Principles of Law cannot be improved. Instead of holding by the existing state of things, *internal* conviction is relied upon and thus begins a subjective independent Freedom, in which the individual finds himself in a position to bring everything to the test of his own conscience, even in defiance of existing constitution. Each one has his "principles," and that view which accords with his private judgement he regards as *practically* the best, and as claiming practical realisation. This decay even Thucydides notices when he speaks of every one's thinking that things are going on badly when he has not a hand in the management.²⁵

Prior to the Sophists the Greek community had functioned as a political universal (or ethical substance, as Hegel would have it) which included its citizens in a manner analogous with the members of a

class. The Sophists challenged the universality of the laws and norms of the polis, and showed that in so far as these were particular they were open to technical manipulation. Hence, as beheld by Protagoras, man was the measure of all things. All determinate entities were measured or limited in relation to the universality of human self-consciousness, within which they were contained as the objects of consciousness.²⁶ Initially, as Hegel observes

the concrete vitality found among the Greeks, is Customary Morality – a life for Religion, for the State, without further reflection, and without analysis . . . But as soon as Thought arises, it investigates the various political constitutions: as the result of its investigation it forms for itself an idea of an improved state of society, and demands that this ideal should take the place of things as they are.²⁷

According to Hegel, there now begins “an age of subjective reflection; i.e. there begins in this period – which coincides with the disintegration of Greece in the Peloponnesian war – the principle of modern times.”²⁸ In his view

That very subjective Freedom which constitutes the principle and determines the peculiar form of Freedom in *our* world - which forms the absolute basis of our political and religious life, could not manifest itself in Greece otherwise than as a *destructive* element. Subjectivity was a grade not greatly in advance of that occupied by the Greek Spirit; that phase must of necessity soon be attained: but it plunged the Greek world into ruin, for the polity which that world embodied was not calculated for this side of humanity – did not recognise this phase; since it had not made its appearance when that polity began to exist.²⁹

The new subjectivism was a direct result of the impasse to which natural philosophy had come, and yet it combined with the new mechanistic world view in undermining the beliefs upon which Greek life traditionally had been grounded. This in turn produced a deterioration of Greek political and religious institutions, although at the time, these could not have been distinguished from one another.³⁰ Until this time, they had been inseparable aspects of a unified view of the cosmos, in which religious and political notions were expressions of one another. But this traditional world view began to collapse, and Hegel identifies

the principle of that corruption as *subjectivity obtaining emancipation for itself*. We see Subjectivity obtruding itself in various ways. Thought – the

subjectively Universal – menaces the beautiful religion of Greece, while the passions of individuals and their caprice menace its political constitution. In short, Subjectivity, comprehending and manifesting itself, threatens the existing state of things in every department – characterised as that state of things is by Immediacy (a primitive unreflecting simplicity). Thought . . . appears here as a principle of decay · decay, viz. of Substantial (prescriptive) morality; for it introduces an antithesis, and asserts essentially rational principles.³¹

The Greeks, who so loved irony, were far too intimately entwined in their fate to recognize two of its remarkably dialectical twists. First, the quest for natural laws that had been inspired by their reverence for political laws eventually did much to undermine the authority of the latter; second, the mechanistic world view, whose roots can be traced back to the rise of Parmenidean philosophy, gained further ground for itself through the work of a humanist movement which was originally directed against it. In both cases, the irony results from a dialectical development involving a self-referential reciprocity of ideas that drives an historical praxis. With reference to the social consequences stemming from the increasing proliferation of this ultimately Eleatic mode of thought, Hegel observes that

In earlier days men meant no harm by thinking: they thought away freely and fearlessly. They thought about God, about Nature, and the State; and they felt sure that a knowledge of the truth was obtainable through thought only, and not through the senses or any random ideas or opinions. But while they so thought, the principal ordinances of life began to be seriously affected by their conclusions. Thought deprived existing institutions of their force. Constitutions fell a victim to thought: religion was assailed by thought: firm religious beliefs which had been always looked upon as revelations were undermined, and in many ways the old faith was upset. The Greek philosophers, for example, became antagonists of the old religion, and destroyed its beliefs. Philosophers were accordingly banished or put to death as revolutionists who had subverted religion and the state, two things which were inseparable. Thought, in short, made itself a power in the real world, and exercised enormous influence . . . What it had done was to overthrow religion and the state.³²

– THE RISE OF SUBJECTIVE FREEDOM – AND THE DEMISE OF THE CITY-STATE

Reacting against the growing fragmentation of Greek culture, Socrates set out to oppose the new subjectivism by affirming that universal

knowledge was possible, and that, while he did not himself possess it,³³ it could nevertheless be attained through a process of careful introspection combined with the proper use of the dialectical method.³⁴ Knowledge was pursued dialectically through the opposition and reciprocal modification of divergent positions in a discussion among friends.³⁵ In the Socratic dialectic, universal knowledge is once again linked to a process of development operating through the mutual tension and adjustment of opposing principles. But unlike the Ionians and Pythagoreans (and after the Sophists), Socrates concerned himself with this process primarily in relation to moral and political issues in abstraction from broader cosmological questions.³⁶ The thrust of the Socratic dialectic was more often directed toward ethical, than toward natural or broadly metaphysical investigations.³⁷ Hence, while Socrates set out to refute social and intellectual trends stemming, in part, from the new natural philosophy, he nevertheless embraced and further advanced these trends through his tacit acknowledgement of the new distinction between social and physical realms of inquiry. He implicitly accepted this presupposition as it was derived from the new mechanistic world view, and like the Sophists, proceeded to fight the encroaching fragmentation of Greek society on the ground which it had already claimed for itself.

The traditional life of the polis had been shaken by the rise of the new subjectivism. No longer able to ground themselves in this tradition, Greek thinkers had consequently begun to despair of any universal foundation for moral action. Socrates sought to refute the relativism of the Sophists with his claim that universal knowledge was accessible to each individual through a process of thoughtful self-examination. He held each man responsible for the condition of his own moral consciousness, and argued that this consciousness must be determined by the individual in abstraction from both the traditional order of the community and traditional views regarding the underlying order of the cosmos. Though subjectivism was introduced by the Sophists, Hegel understands Socrates as arriving at a principle of moral autonomy that was implicit within subjective universality.

And it was in *Socrates* that . . . the principle of subjectivity – of the absolute inherent independence of Thought – attained free expression. He taught that man has to discover and recognise in himself what is the Right and Good, and that this Right and Good is in its nature universal. Socrates is celebrated as a Teacher of Morality, but we should rather call him the *Inventor of Morality*. The Greeks had a customary morality; but

Socrates undertook to teach them what moral virtues, duties, etc., were. The moral man is not he who merely wills and does that which is right – not the merely innocent man – but he who has the consciousness of what he is doing. Socrates – in assigning to insight, to conviction, the determination of men's actions – posited the Individual as capable of final moral decision, in contraposition to Country and to Customary Morality . . .³⁸

Against the particularism and relativism of the Sophists, Socrates sought to locate new principles of universality compatible with rational criticism. Yet in doing so he reduced traditional norms to particulars in relation to his critical rationality. In other words, he challenged the citizens of Athens to think for themselves instead of accepting customary notions of piety, duty, justice, etc. upon which the life of the polis was implicitly grounded.

In so far as Socrates invited the rational evaluation of these traditional notions upon which the polis was based he inadvertently treated the city as limited and particularized in relation to thought.³⁹ Traditionally, the polis had encompassed the lives of its citizens in a manner analogous with a set's inclusion of its members, yet the limitations and particularity of the state were not, in turn, the focus of the citizens' reflection. Under the tutelage of Socrates, each questioning citizen became the locus for a subjective universality in relation to which the polis was particularized in so far as its limitations were evaluated in relation to rational principles. Thus the state also came to be particularized in relation to each of those particulars that it contained. From the standpoint of OM, the revolutionary innovation that Socrates achieved was the reconstitution of the relationship between citizen and state in terms of RU. At this historical juncture, the relationship between the polis and each of Socrates' rationally critical pupils therefore could be conceived on the model of a class that contained itself as a member.

The polis began to break down when its individual citizens became aware of its limitations, limitations that were always implicit within it, but which were previously unrecognized. In keeping with Hegel's metaphilosophy, these limitations could only have been recognized through this process in which consciousness elevated itself to a new and higher level of reflection and rational criticism. This recognition opened the door to opportunities for new forms of interaction, undermining traditional roles and relationships. Hegel notes that "as soon as reflection supervened and individuals withdrew into themselves and dissociated themselves from established custom to

live their own lives according to their own wishes, degeneration and contradiction arose".⁴⁰ Since the polis was approached by its newly reflective citizens as a lower level particular (that is, in so far as its traditional norms were viewed as limited, inadequate and malleable in relation to the subjective standards of rational universality), it was already prepared from within for its reduction to membership as a particular component of an expansive empire, constituting a new and higher level form of political universality.

Thus, the early unity of individual, community and cosmos underwent a process of fragmentation that Hegel traces from the innovations of Eleatic thought through the sequential responses of the pluralists, the Sophists and Socrates. The result was a new principle of subjective freedom and moral autonomy that was incompatible with the unreflective harmony of the city-state.

Why did the principle of subjective universality snowball in this way, beginning from Parmenides' initial distinction between thought and experience? Once we ascend to a view of the gap between thought and experience, we cannot think our way back down from it. This is because any effort to reconcile or reunite thought and experience, any effort to think our way back into that world, must inevitably reduce that world to a limited particular in relation to thought. From an Hegelian perspective, the cultural dialectic that Socrates inadvertently advanced would require more than two millennia to arrive at a reinstatement of substantive universality, and it was beyond the power of the Athenians to think their way back into the unity of the polis. Hence, the jury that sentenced Socrates was not entirely mistaken in its conviction of his philosophical dialectic as an enemy of the polis.

No doubt it was essential that the individual moral consciousness should abstract itself from the traditional order since that order had grown infirm, but in advocating that abstraction, Socrates inadvertently, though unavoidably, acquiesced in the fragmentation which he sought to oppose. In a sense, he had surrendered from the start, for he began not by attempting the revitalization of traditional Greek culture, and not by suggesting the rejuvenation of holistic cosmogony, but by acknowledging at least one of the dichotomies implicit in the outlook of the new natural philosophy, stemming originally from the same dichotomy in Parmenidean metaphysics. Because he tacitly accepted certain presuppositions of this encroaching world view, he attacked the symptoms and not the source of Greek fragmentation, and by asserting the self-referential element of morality, he ended by

significantly advancing the cause of the new subjectivism. Though Socrates was widely respected for the patent nobility of his attempt, the inherent contradiction of his approach was recognized by his contemporaries who found it necessary to defend their faltering world view through the execution of the sage on the grounds of impiety and corruption of the youth.⁴¹ Yet this contradiction, which had advanced from its Eleatic origins through Socrates' assertion of subjective universality against the same substantive universality that he sought to defend, had caught hold of the city of Athens and assured a fateful reciprocity.

But when on account of the giving utterance to that principle which was advancing to recognition, Socrates is condemned to death, the sentence bears on the one hand the aspect of unimpeachable rectitude – in as much as the Athenian people condemns its deadliest foe – but on the other hand, that of a deeply tragical character, in as much as the Athenians had to make the discovery, that what they reprobated in Socrates had already struck firm root among themselves, and that they must be pronounced guilty or innocent with him . . . In Athens that higher principle which proved the ruin of the Athenian state, advanced in its development without intermission. Spirit had acquired the propensity to gain satisfaction for itself – to reflect.⁴²

– OVERVIEW –

In Hegel's view, the same contradictions that led to the fragmentation of the polis reappeared as faults within the Christian and modern traditions. Before proceeding further, it will be helpful to have an overview of this development along with definitions of a few key terms.

"Fragmentation" is a term appearing in the literature of social theory, as well as in other disciplines as diverse as literary criticism and the philosophy of physics.⁴³ Yet while it has acquired a certain descriptive familiarity, it has not received a general definition. The term often connotes a condition of disintegration, or of separation from some greater whole. It usually carries normative or pejorative connotations, suggesting that a given situation is inadequate or undesirable, and that a transition to integration and coherence would be preferable.

Hegel's references to fragmentation (*Entzweiung*) in describing the collapse of the polis, and in numerous other contexts, follow Schiller's application of the term to describe the disintegration of

traditional culture in the wake of the Enlightenment.⁴⁴ The term is frequently used in the secondary literature on Hegel,⁴⁵ and has been introduced in communitarian discussions.⁴⁶

For purposes of the following discussion, “fragmentation” will be used to describe the experience of particularity. In accord with Hegel’s doctrine of the concept a stage of particularity intervenes between consecutive stages of universality, and one or more stages of particularity are necessary in any process, whether physical, biological, historical, political, etc. In physical science or philosophy, or in any other general consideration of any process that does not directly involve sentient beings, or human beings, or, more specifically, me and my friends, it is possible to approach particularity with something like “objective detachment”. Yet when I consider my personal development, or that of my personal relationships, in terms of such processes, then I find that I (we) may suffer through periods of uncertainty and disintegration, during which I (we) seek some principle, purpose or approach that will provide a basis for reorientation. And when such processes involve an historical development, then whole generations may suffer during periods of cultural disintegration, while awaiting the development of a new principle of universality that would provide a basis for cultural reintegration. Whereas such a stage of particularity is inevitable from a philosophical perspective, those who are undergoing the experience, and particularly those theorists and other therapists who feel compelled to respond to human misery, are more likely to regard it in pejorative terms such as “fragmentation”. When viewed with detachment from a “distance”, it is a stage of particularity, but when viewed from the “inside”, from the point of view of those undergoing the experience, it is fragmentation.

Fragmentation occurs, in accord with OM, when some preceding form of universality encounters its limitations. This leads to its particularization in relation to (sometimes newly encountered) elements which it does not include, and which, in that respect, it excludes. In an historical context, such as that of ancient Greece, the particularization of the preceding form of cultural universality (namely, the life of the polis) was experienced as the disintegration of the culture. What was needed at that stage was a new form of universality capable of unifying and reintegrating the incoherent and mutually exclusive elements of thought and experience. From an Hegelian viewpoint, this new form of universality was (as always) implicit within those particulars, though during this period of cultural fragmentation it had yet to be recognized. In accord with Hegel’s metaphilosophy, it was the task of

philosophy to locate the new principle of universality which would unite disparate elements of thought and experience in order to provide the conceptual basis for a new stage of development.

The converse of fragmentation is a condition of harmony, integration, coherence, or concrete universality, where universality is understood, once again, as that which integrates, unites or connects particulars. For example, a universal concept, law or principle may provide a basis for connecting, integrating, organizing or understanding a set of particular events, experiences or ideas. In a specifically political context, a condition of universality is that which unites the inhabitants of a territory as members of a community and provides for the integration of their diverse forms of socio-cultural experience, so that there is an overall coherence about their lives together which may come to be presupposed and taken for granted throughout extended periods of their history.

It was in the polis, however, that cognitive and collective expressions of universality were first differentiated from one another. Hegel trades upon this distinction in his discussion of substantive and subjective forms of universality.

Firstly, there is the universal substance of the state, the . . . independent spirit of the nation; and secondly, there is individuality as such, the realm of subjective freedom. The question is whether the real life of individuals is one of unreflecting habit and custom in relation to the basic unity, or whether these individuals are reflecting personalities and subjects who exist for themselves. In this connection, we must distinguish between substantial freedom and subjective freedom . . . Where there is merely substantial freedom, commandments and laws are regarded as firmly established in and for themselves, and the individual subject adopts an attitude of complete subservience towards them. Besides, these laws need not accord with the will of the individual, and the subjects are therefore like children, who obey their parents without will or insight of their own. But as subjective freedom arises and man descends from the realm of external reality into his own spirit, reflection creates an antithesis which contains the negation of reality.⁴⁷

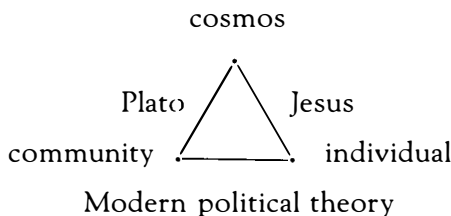
With the discovery of subjective freedom and the decline of the polis these two poles fell apart, and Hegel understands world history as the painful and laborious process of their gradual reconciliation within a new and higher level universality that integrates subjective freedom within the organic unity of the state.

The sole purpose of world history is to create a situation in which these two poles are absolutely united and truly reconciled. They are reconciled in

such a way that the free subject is not submerged in the objective existence, but is accorded its independent rights; and at the same time the absolute spirit, the realm of pure objective unity, realises its absolute right.⁴⁸

Hegel viewed the fragmentation of the polis as a deep cultural trauma. He saw it as a kind of cultural breakdown involving fundamental issues and contradictions that would impel the subsequent development of Western civilization, and particularly Western thought, through a long development toward a new form of integration. For Hegel, Christianity is a direct but one-sided response to those emergent ideas that undermined Greek culture, and the modern tradition is, in turn, a direct but equally one-sided response to the contradictions of the Christian era. Hegel understood his philosophy not only as a response to the contradictions in the modern tradition, but to the entire historical process occurring since the collapse of the polis. The development of these contradictions is the topic of the subsequent chapters. These chapters trace a more or less continuous process of socio-cultural fragmentation, unravelling around these fundamental contradictions; unfolding itself throughout history, and underpinning the development of self-consciousness. They describe the historical vicissitudes of God, the world and man, once harmonized in the life of the polis, and thenceforth estranged.

As in ancient Greece, the Christian and modern eras have witnessed the proliferation of new forms of fragmentation resulting dialectically from attempts to address preceding forms of diremption. Thus, Plato managed to reintegrate the polity and the absolute, but only through his rejection of individualism and subjective freedom. Christianity achieved a unification of God and man, but only through its exclusion of the temporal order. The modern era has concerned itself with the reintegration of the individual and the temporal order, often to the exclusion of spiritual considerations. Thus, if we locate the individual, the community, and the cosmos, each at the vertex of a triangle, then Plato, Jesus and modern political theory appear as offering mutually compensatory and incomplete reconciliations.



From an Hegelian perspective fragmentation has generally tended to proliferate since the decline of the polis, because each of the above approaches to the problem has been itself incomplete and fragmented. Each of these complementary approaches has sought to unite two components of the triad by in some way rejecting, excluding or ignoring the third. On this view, the three terms that fell apart with the decline of the polis have never since been reunited, and it is for this reason that subsequent attempts to resolve fragmentation have tended toward its proliferation. The solution is a holistic approach, which transcends modern disciplinary distinctions, which reintegrates substantive and subjective universalities as related reciprocally within a self-containing society, and which was the focus of Hegel's efforts.

Again from an Hegelian perspective, the solution must be holistic because it is only through a comprehension of the self-containment and self-determination of the cosmological totality that it is possible to understand the true nature of universality and its realization in the particular. Yet, as discussed at the outset of Chapter 2, we are capable of grasping this truth only in so far as we have understood the development of self-consciousness and the nature of subjective universality. And as Chapter 5 will show, Hegel thought that the individual could comprehend his relationship to a totality as expansive as the cosmos through his experience (in the ancient tradition described by McNeill) with the more familiar totality of his community, and reciprocally, that the individual's comprehension of his relation to the cosmos would provide a meaningful context for his moral and political experience. On Hegel's analysis, socio-cultural fragmentation began with the diremption of these three terms and it cannot be overcome until they are united once again in a conception of substantive universality that embraces subjective freedom. The following chapter considers the reciprocity of philosophy and fragmentation in the responses of Plato, Jesus and modern political thought. Chapter 5 will argue that a reinterpretation of Hegelian philosophy in terms of OM serves to reintegrate all three vertices of the triangle, with ramifications for contemporary political philosophy, as suggested in chapter six.

– NOTES –

1. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, §273.
2. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 225–74, esp. p. 269.
3. McNeill, *The Rise of the West*, p. 214–15; Also see Hussey, *The Presocratics*.

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4. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 198–9.
 5. Ibid., p. 231.
 6. Ibid., pp. 198–9.
 7. Ibid., pp. 232–3.
 8. Ibid., pp. 199, 235–6.
 9. Ibid., p. 237.
 10. Ibid.
 11. Ibid., p. 278.
 12. Ibid., p. 254.
 13. Ibid., p. 246.
 14. Ibid., p. 240.
 15. Ibid., pp. 240, 250.
 16. Ibid., p. 254.
 17. Ibid., p. 266.
 18. Ibid., pp. 289, 305, 315.
 19. Ibid., p. 384.
 20. Ibid., pp. 329–30.
 21. Ibid., p. 325.
 22. Ibid., p. 371. Of Gorgias in particular, Hegel observes that, “He is said to have been a disciple of Empedocles, but he also knew the Eleatics, and his dialectic partakes of the manner and method of the latter.” Ibid., p. 378.
 23. See Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*.
 24. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 354–5, 369, 371, 374, 378–9.
 25. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 253.
 26. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 373–5.
 27. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 267–8.
 28. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 350.
 29. Ibid., pp. 252–3.
 30. Ibid., pp. 324–5, 356–7, 370, 374.
 31. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 267.
 32. Hegel, *Logic*, §19.
 33. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 398–400, 406.
 34. Ibid., p. 387.
 35. Ibid., pp. 398–400.
 36. Ibid., pp. 387–9, 397, 407.
 37. Ibid., p. 397.
 38. Ibid., pp. 269–70.
 39. Ibid., p. 385.
 40. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, p. 62.
 41. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 421, 438–45.
 42. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 270.
 43. Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*.
 44. Schiller, *Briefe über die Ästhetische Erziehung der Menschen in Nationalausgabe*, vol. 20, p. 323.
 45. For example, the term is used by D. O’Brien (*Hegel on Reason and History, A Contemporary Interpretation*) with reference to Hegel’s assessment of nonphilosophical histories. It is used extensively by Plant in social, cultural, political and personal contexts (*Hegel: An Introduction*, pp. 16, 18, 21–4, 28, 31, 33, 36, 50, 61,

63–4, 74, 76, 79, 101–2, 113, 117, 148, 163, 183), and it is given similar applications by Lukács (*The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, pp. 64, 97); Solomon (*In the Spirit of Hegel*, p. 34); Taylor (*Hegel*, pp. 28, 44, 76); Hardimon (*Hegel's Social Philosophy*, pp. 105–6); Hinchman, (*Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment*, pp. 69, 72, 219); Cullen, (*Hegel's Social and Political Thought: An Introduction*, pp. 1, 2, 7, 53); Smith, (*Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, pp. 32–3) and many others.

46. Sandel, *Liberalism and its Critics*.

47. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, pp. 197–8.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

Philosophy and Fragmentation

Profoundly moved by the death of his friend, Plato abandoned his interests in poetry and politics in order to assume the task that Socrates had begun. He was motivated in this not only by personal loyalty, but by his commitment to the task of defending the city-state as a cultural entity against the social and moral deterioration that had resulted from the subjectivist doctrines of the Sophists. Since this social decline could be traced to an underlying spiritual crisis stemming in part from the impact of the new mechanistic philosophies on traditional Greek beliefs, it was clear to Plato that Socrates had not gone nearly far enough. Socrates had been correct in asserting the possibility of universal knowledge, but no defence of traditional Greek values would be adequate if it confined itself to ethical problems. A reasoned defence of the city-state would have to restore its universal validity through relocation within a broader cosmological view. Thus, Plato not only joined in the Socratic enterprise, arguing that universal knowledge was accessible through the mediation of critical thought, but went on to assert that this universality reflected a deeper metaphysical order. "What Socrates began," says Hegel, "was carried out by Plato, who acknowledged only the universal, the Idea, as that which has existence."¹

According to received views, the decline of Greek society left Plato with two alternatives. Either he could recognize that the city-state belonged to the past, join with the disruptive forces and piece together a new society from the elements that had contributed to the destruction of the old; or else he could use all of his powers to uphold the city-state. Commentators such as Browning and Inwood attribute the former objective to Plato and rebuke Hegel for attributing the latter. On either of these views, however, Plato appears as a

failure, for either he sought refuge in an impotent ideal or he railed against the tide.

Yet the preceding interpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy suggests that this choice was not actually available to Plato. Plato could not have revived the city-state because its time was already past. But, on the other hand, he could not hope to create a new society since, at least in its content, every philosophy is a child of its time. No philosopher can provide a detailed blueprint of the future. The calling that Plato heeded was, in Hegel's view, a synthesis of these apparent alternatives. Far from resurrecting the city-state, Plato could aspire to nothing more than a thorough comprehension of the polis as the embodiment of Greek culture and thought. Nevertheless, the full achievement of this philosophical comprehension would inevitably focus upon the limitations of Hellenic culture and would thereby provide a implicit indication of the direction that subsequent cultural development would take in response to those problems. Viewed in this light, Plato's work becomes a brilliant success, for, at least according to Hegel, this is precisely what he accomplished.

Plato had attempted to vindicate Socrates through the exposition of a universal foundation for knowledge and virtue accessible to critical rationality. In doing so, he drew from the breadth of the Greek philosophical tradition, and struggled toward an intellectual synthesis intended to deter the further fragmentation of Greek society. While this synthesis was heavily influenced by Pythagorean cosmogony, and while it paid careful attention to the views of Heraclitus, the pluralists and the principal Sophists, it none the less combined these elements within an implicitly Eleatic outlook.

Like Parmenides, Plato took the Heraclitean notion of a changing world and dismissed it as merely appearance or "opinion".² And like Parmenides, he considered this Heraclitean world as ontologically secondary to his conception of reality as static perfection. It is therefore not surprising that, like Parmenides, Plato found it very difficult to account for the relation between these two.³ In its doctrine of the forms, Plato's ontology consequently experienced some of the same problems that the Greeks had chronically encountered in attempting to reconcile the rational force of the Parmenidean view with the data of sense experience. Yet it was these very same problems with this same dichotomy that had given rise to the mechanistic natural philosophies of the pluralists, and that had thereby contributed to the new mood of subjectivism in Greek culture – the mood which was

exploited by the Sophists and advanced, however inadvertently, by the ethical investigations of Socrates.

Now it is this same subjectivism that Plato is determined to restrict in his political philosophy, and yet his philosophy is principally inspired by the same Eleatic ontology which had originally contributed to the rise of that very subjectivism. Thus there is a sense in which Plato's philosophy is paradoxically at odds with itself, as one would be in attempting to put out a fire with petroleum. Far from offering Greek society an effective resolution of this chronic dualism, it would appear that Plato fell victim to it himself through its incorporation in his own philosophy.

Plato went much further than Socrates in developing a metaphysical system designed in response to the disruptive doctrines of the Sophists and the pluralists. In attempting to respond to these groups, Plato was nevertheless inspired by a characteristically Parmenidean ontology that established the structure for his philosophical outlook. Thus Plato failed in his attempt to prevent the further deterioration of Greek society, at least in part, because, like Socrates, he failed to address the ultimate source of this deterioration. Instead, he wound up incorporating and further entrenching the Parmenidean dichotomy between change, multiplicity and the sensible world on the one hand, and a static reality accessible only to thought. It was this very dichotomy that the pluralists had attempted to resolve, and it was in part the mechanistic nature of their response that contributed to the rise of the Sophists and the new subjectivism. Thus, Platonic philosophy might be said to have failed in that it left the Greek spiritual crisis precisely where it had started, while none the less projecting this same, ultimately Parmenidean, dichotomy into the development of Christian thought.

Plato failed, on this view, because like the pluralists, the Sophists and Socrates before him, he ultimately failed to account for the determination of phenomenal events in relation to the absolute. In other words, he failed to reconcile the rational, immutable elements of Parmenidean Being with the phenomenal world of change and multiplicity as it manifested itself in the opposing perceptions of various subjects. Like Parmenides himself, he failed to provide a clear account of the relation between the way of truth and the way of opinion.

From an Hegelian view, however, this becomes virtually the measure of his success. The task of a philosopher, according to Hegel, is to comprehend the spirit of his age in such a way that he grasps its

inherent contradictions. He cannot hope to resolve fully these contradictions himself, for the philosopher is inevitably a child of his time, and this can only be the task of the age which follows. But if he truly grasps the essence of his era, as it entwines itself around these inherent contradictions, the philosopher will have succeeded at least in indicating the general direction that future development must take in response to these problems, and on Hegel's interpretation, this is precisely what Plato accomplished.

Thus, according to Hegel, the genius of Platonic philosophy is evident, above all, in the manner that its inherent contradiction turns on the very same dichotomies -- change and reality, experience and the absolute, subjectivity and substantial universality -- that had plagued the Greek tradition since Parmenides and that had further helped to undermine the traditional social order. In the twilight of its decline, Plato achieved a synthetic comprehension of Greek culture reflecting its essential contradictions and thereby implicitly indicating the cause of its deterioration.

Plato understood the traditional culture of Greece well enough to realize that it was incapable of incorporating the spirit of subjectivism. It had long relied upon an unreflective allegiance to an established order, that had been accepted as the embodiment of divine or universal wisdom, and was, as a consequence, deeply vulnerable to any dichotomy capable of establishing a rift between the notions of a universal truth, on the one hand, and a divergent subjective perception on the other. According to Hegel the Greek spiritual crisis thus turned on the opposition of the substantial to the subjective -- as that separation originated within and developed out of, the Eleatic view -- and Plato could not have comprehended either that culture or its crisis without bringing this contradiction to a head.

the main thought which forms the groundwork of Plato's *Republic* is the same which is to be regarded as the principle of the common Greek morality, namely, that established morality has in general the relation of the substantial, and therefore is maintained as divine. This is without question the fundamental determination. The determination which stands in contrast to this substantial relation of the individual to established morality, is the subjective will of the individual, reflective morality. This exists when individuals, instead of being moved to action by respect and reverence for the institutions of the state and of the fatherland, from their own convictions, and after moral deliberation, come of themselves to a decision, and determine their actions accordingly. This principle of subjective freedom is a later growth, it is the principle of our modern days of

culture; it however, entered also into the Greek world, but as the principle of the destruction of the Greek ethical life.⁴

Through the severity of his attempt to restrict subjective freedom, Plato illuminated that principle as the challenge which fatally exceeded the capacity of the established order, and hence as the contradiction which was implicit within it from the start. Beyond the limited effort of Socrates, Plato was the first to recognize that the difficulty lay in the rise of this subjectivism and in its reconciliation with substantive universality -- conceived either culturally, politically or epistemologically. By means of his comprehension of this fundamental difficulty Plato's philosophy, in accord with Hegel's metaphilosophy, provides an implicit indication as to the direction that the world would take in subsequently coming to terms with this problem. In Hegel's words:

this movement of the individual, this principle of subjective freedom, is sometimes ignored by Plato, and sometimes even intentionally disparaged, because it proved itself to be what had wrought the ruin of Greece; and he considers only how the state may best be organised, and not subjective individuality. *In passing beyond the principle of Greek morality, which in its substantial liberty cannot brook the rise of subjective liberty, the Platonic philosophy at once grasps the above principle, and in so doing proceeds still farther.*⁵

Implicitly throughout the form and method of Plato's work, and somewhat more explicitly in the content of his later dialogues, Hegel is consequently able to locate certain basic information about the nature of subjectivity which would be fully revealed only through the subsequent course of world development. Private property, for example, was forbidden to Plato's ruling class. Hegel links this abolition of property to Plato's restriction of subjective freedom, thereby deriving an important insight as to the nature of this connection, a connection that would subsequently rise to a new prominence, both in the development of social thought and in the formulation of Hegel's own political philosophy. It is through his possessions that an individual is able to express and realize himself, and in this attempt to restrict subjectivism, this is the difficulty that property presented for Plato. "Personal property", says Hegel, "is a possession which belongs to me as a certain person, and in which my person as such comes into existence, into reality; on this ground Plato excludes it."⁶ But it is above all in Plato's attempt to restrict subjectivism through

social stratification that Hegel finds the significance of freedom in modern society: "It specially harmonises with this particular quality of excluding the principle of subjectivity that Plato in the first place does not allow individuals to choose their own class; this we demand as necessary to freedom."⁷ The Platonic system of classes

seems in direct contradiction to our principle, for although it is considered right that to a certain class there should belong a special capacity and skill, it always remains a matter of inclination which class one is to belong to; and with this inclination, as an apparently free choice, the class makes itself for itself. But it is not permitted that another individual should prescribe as to this, or say, for example: "Because you are not serviceable for anything better, you are to be a labourer." Everyone may make the experiment for himself; he must be allowed to decide regarding his own affairs as subject in a subjective manner, by his own free will, as well as in consideration of external circumstances; and nothing must therefore be put in his way if he says for instance: "I should like to apply myself to study."⁸

It is through the self-referential freedom of this choice that "the class makes itself for itself", or that members of the class achieve class consciousness. This anticipation of Marxist themes is extended to concerns about the exploitive features of social hierarchy as illustrated in an indignant citation of Plato: Hegel is concerned that the condition of affairs in the industrial class causes the state but little anxiety, "for though cobblers should prove poor and worthless, and should be only in appearance what they ought to be, that is no great misfortune for the state".⁹ In order to appreciate Hegel's own approach to this enduring problem it will be helpful to examine his interpretation of Plato's notion of justice as anticipating his own concept of freedom.

— FREEDOM AS JUSTICE: — HEGEL'S INTERPRETATION OF PLATO —

In accord with his metaphilosophy, Hegel considers Plato's conception of justice to have implications for subsequent political thought that go well beyond Plato's theory of the state. He begins by crediting Plato with the realization that the individual is an expression of the universal substance of the state. This position is contrasted with the political theories of the seventeenth century that conceived of the state as though it had been formed through the mutual agreement of individuals which were otherwise independent and morally mature.

In Hegel's view such theories are absurd. He follows Rousseau (who followed Plato) in arguing that the notion of human individuality is meaningless apart from that of a community, "so that practically, the state and the individual are the same in essence".¹⁰ The state is not a medium for the realization of individual ends, so much as the individual is an expression, or a particular determination, of his community. Hegel, Rousseau and Plato are alike in defending this line of thought against various theories of political individualism, and Hegel seconds Plato in his assertion that the contrast between the two positions is particularly well-defined in terms of their differing notions of justice.¹¹

For Hegel, this notion of the individual as an expression of a substantial or universal ethical order is properly explicated according to an organic model. In an organism, such as the human body, for example, the various parts give expression to the whole, while the organism as a whole is continually produced through the diversified activities of its members. Something is organic according to Hegel, when its parts, like members of the body, are related to one another in such a way as to constitute an interdependent whole, through which they are reciprocally constituted. It is, then, with some justification that Hegel sees his own notion of a political organism as corresponding to Plato's substantialist notion of justice. And on the strength of this organicism, Hegel considers Platonic justice as anticipating that subsequent political development would require a reconciliation between the substantive universality of the state and moral subjectivity.

Because Plato thus takes his start from that justice which implies that the just man exists only as a moral member of the state . . . he opens up before us the organism of the moral commonwealth, i.e. the differences which lie in the concept of moral substance. Through the development of these moments it becomes living and existing, but these moments are not independent, for they are held in unity. Plato regards these moments of the moral organism under three aspects, first as they exist in the state as classes; secondly, as virtues, or moments in morality; thirdly, as moments of the individual subject, in the empirical actions of the will. Plato . . . shows how traditional morality has a living movement in itself; he demonstrates its inward organicism. For it is inner systemisation, as in organic life, and not solid dead unity, like that of metals, which comes to pass by means of the different functions of the organs which go to make up this living self-moving unity.¹²

Again and again, Hegel finds his own principles of SC and RU implicit within Plato's conception of justice. According to Hegel, the

dynamism inherent in this notion of justice accounts for its selection as the fundamental virtue and the source of social life.

the Concept of justice is the foundation, the Idea of the whole, which falls into organic divisions, *so that every part is only, as it were, a moment in the whole, and the whole exists through it.* Thus the classes or qualities spoken of are nothing else than the moments of this whole. Justice is only the general and all-pervading quality; but at the same time it implies the independence of every part, to which the state gives liberty of action.¹³ [emphasis added]

Justice is the “Idea of the whole” which is differentiated, expressed and reproduced throughout the interconnection of its parts. To each particular individual and class, justice gives its proper import in relation to all the others. Hence, as Hegel remarks, the activity of each individual may be seen as expressing the justice of the whole, and, in this way, the principle of justice may be seen as differentiated or particularized through the various activities in which every individual is “developed and brought into actuality”.¹⁴ But at the same time, diverse individual activities are reunited as they continuously reconstitute the community as a whole.

Thus, according to Hegel’s explication, justice in the Platonic state may be seen as a process occurring reciprocally in either of two directions, and as thereby anticipating Hegel’s doctrine of the concept (pp. 47–8) and corresponding with the preceding discussion of a self-containing class (pp. 49, 50). On the one hand, the particular individuals and classes give expression to the whole, and in this way the individuals are said to be constituted by the whole, or to become particular determinations of the whole. In this respect Platonic justice may be seen as a process which moves from the universal to the particular. But at the same time the whole is constituted or produced as the combination of all the activities and relations among the particular individuals. Thus justice may also be seen as a movement from the particular to the universal. In fact, Hegel wishes to argue that justice must be properly understood as this movement occurring in both directions, such that the universal continually produces the particular, and the particular continually reconstitutes the universal.¹⁵ As with the preceding discussion of the concept, the particular is determined through the differentiation of the universal, and the universal is reconstituted as a new and higher level through its reunification of these particulars. In accord

with RU, Hegel explains that the universal and particular continually reproduce and thereby continually develop each other as they generate the cohesive individuality of an integrated community: "This moral substance which constitutes the spirit, life and Being of individuality, and which is its foundation, systematises itself into a living, organic whole, and at the same time it differentiates itself into its members, whose activity signifies the production of the whole."¹⁶

The relationship of individual and state may be modelled in terms of RU in so far as the state determines and contributes to the development of the individual while the individual, through his activities, modifies and contributes to the development of the state. In so far as the citizen is affected by the policies and laws of the state he is limited and in that sense particularized in relation to its universality. On the other hand, in so far as he consciously reflects upon the established order and thereby recognizes its limitations, or in so far as his actions tend to modify or expand those patterns and norms of social interaction in which that order consists, the state may be considered to be limited in relation to the subjective universality of the individual citizen.

Thus, the relationship of the individual and the state may be conceived in terms of SC. On the one hand, the individual citizen is contained, determined and particularized within the universality of the state. On the other hand, the political order is limited and particularized in so far as it is contained as an object of conscious reflection on the part of the individual citizen and is further determined in so far as his actions contribute to its modification. This relationship of reciprocal universality is actualized to the extent that the state and its individual members contribute reciprocally to one another's development through their reciprocal activities of limitation and transcendence. In this way, all of those diverse interactions that express reciprocal relations among individuals and community together constitute a single historical process through which the state and each of its individual members continuously participate in one another's transformation, and through which they thereby cohere. In this transformative process, individual and community attain a reconciliation, whereby subjective freedom is expressed through the individual's contribution to the determination and realization of a substantive universality identified with the historical development of the state. According to Hegel, this self-dirempting, self-determining and self-containing process is the totality of the state, and when self-consciously comprehended, this process is freedom. It is this process

that Hegel finds implicit in Plato's conception of justice, however much it must remain unrealized in Plato's conception of the state.

Thus, Hegel argues that if we are to grasp the deeper implications of Platonic justice, then we must not be content to interpret it merely within the static, superficial terms of the understanding. In accord with OM, we must come to see it as a process or an activity in which the state as a whole continually differentiates itself through the activity of the individuals, the same activity in which these individuals express and realize themselves; while, on the other hand, this activity of the individuals reciprocally reproduces, reconstitutes and develops the whole. In this way, Hegel reads Platonic justice as an anticipation of his own concepts of reason and freedom; for Hegelian freedom is precisely this process in which the community as a whole, and all of the individuals within it, interact toward their continuous realization and development. "Justice, therefore according to its true conception", says Hegel is, "in our eyes freedom in the subjective sense."¹⁷ In his attempt to restrict subjective freedom, Plato implicitly grasped the inherent nature of that principle. And reciprocally, Hegel, understands the dynamic freedom of the modern state as a response to the injustice of reified class relations, as illustrated in Plato's *Republic*.

The substantial freedom of the Hegelian state could not have been realized in Plato's *Republic* because it could not be realized in the polis. Within the Greek world half of this reciprocal relationship was actualized in abstraction from the other. The state contained its individual citizens as a class contains its members, but the limitations and particularity of the state were not in turn the focus of the individual's reflection. Now it was the latter function that Socrates proclaimed not as the citizen's right but as his duty. The realization of the RU of citizen and state was the revolutionary innovation of Socrates and the demise of that abstract, unreflective universality upon which the polis depended. Hence, it was this subjective universality that Plato sought to restrict in his efforts to reinstate Greek political culture. "If", as Foster remarked, "he had made intelligent insight into the principle of a law the precondition not only of prescribing a law but of obeying it, if, that is to say, he had made Sophia as well as *Dikaiousune* (justice) the universal virtue of all classes of the city, then freedom would have taken the place of justice as the ground and end of political society, and the Platonic Polis would have been superseded by the Hegelian State."¹⁸

Since it was philosophy that initially produced the diremption of the individual from the polis, Plato sought to segregate philosophers

from society. Whereas the philosophers were allowed to achieve that universality of rational thought that Socrates had advocated, their lives were carefully regimented and restrained so as to render them incapable of realizing that individuality which would otherwise result from their subjective universality. Ordinary citizens of the Republic were in less danger of individuality since they were denied the privileges of philosophy and universal thought in relation to which the laws and norms of the state must inevitably appear as limited particulars. Nevertheless they were protected from the pernicious influence of poets and playwrights which might inspire criticism of social norms, the latter being further reinforced by myths designed for that purpose.

Yet whereas Plato's Republic fell short of actualized freedom due to Plato's inability to recognize a fully reciprocal relationship between the individual and the state, the principle of self-containment was implicit once again in the role that justice played in symmetrically structuring the state and the individual soul. Justice, says Socrates in the second book of the *Republic* is not only in the individual but also in the state; and the state is greater than the individual; justice is therefore imprinted on states in larger characters and is more easily recognized. Each individual is a microcosm of the state, such that the individual soul contained within the state is identical with that which contains it.

Now, according to Hegel, freedom is possible, in part, because the structure of the world is rational, and is consequently reflected in the structure of the human mind. The process or method according to which reality develops itself is the same as the process of human cognition, and as a direct result it is possible for man and world, individual and community, to participate in one another's development. In Plato's affirmation of the possibility of universal knowledge we have already found an anticipation of the Hegelian position, since thought and reality are understood to represent this same universality. Plato and Hegel are both concerned with a tension between appearance and reality that reason transcends. For Plato this transcendence is justice; for Hegel it is freedom.¹⁹ Understood at its deepest level, Hegel argues, the Platonic notion of justice is "spirit striving to realize itself" and thus, it "is the existence of freedom here and now, the actuality of self-conscious intelligent existence in and at home with itself and possessing activity".²⁰

In this vein, Hegel also observes that while Plato relied upon the dialectical method in the presentation of his dialogues, he was not

explicitly aware of this movement as underlying objective reality. Thus, on its surface, the Platonic dialectic remains strictly subjective, and is not allowed to pass over into objectivity. Hegel argues that because Plato was not conscious of the substantial nature of the dialectic, his conception of the universal was necessarily static and incapable of any clear connection to its objective determinations.²¹ Plato went far beyond Socrates in his comprehension of the universal, but because the Platonic Idea lacks this explicit dynamism, it also lacks an explicit relation to the world of perception.

Hegel argues that because Plato was unaware of the connection between the subjective aspects of the Concept and its objective determination, his notion of the universal Idea remained merely abstract and isolated from reality. Thus, in the final analysis, Plato failed to resolve the Parmenidean dichotomy between the universal way of truth and the determinate world of sensation, just as he failed to resolve the substantial universality of the polis with the principle of subjective freedom. Hegel does not let his readers forget that Platonic justice is no more than an *implicitly* dynamic universal. Like the Platonic Idea it is incapable of fully realizing itself, and as a consequence, the *Republic* lacks the subjective freedom of the modern state, which fulfils itself only through the complete development of the individual. In this way, Hegel contrasts the Platonic Idea with his own conception of the Idea as it embodies itself in the modern ethical community.

Therein lies the very limit of the Platonic Idea – to emerge only as abstract idea. But, in fact, the true Idea is nothing else than this, that every moment should perfectly realise and embody itself, and make itself independent, while at the same time, in its independence, it is for mind a thing sublated. In conformity with this Idea, individuality must fully realise itself, must have its sphere and domain in the state, and yet be resolved in it.²²

— DESCRIPTION AND PRESCRIPTION IN — HEGEL'S DISCUSSION OF PLATO

Hegel has been charged with neglecting the novelty and aesthetic lustre of Plato's political thought in favour of his own metaphysical and metaphilosophical agenda. And whether or not that agenda was politically retrogressive, most scholars have viewed it as metaphilosophically retrospective. Hegel is said to have recognized only the descriptive role of philosophy, while denying its prescriptive competence. According to Inwood, for example, Hegel was "(u)nable

to resist the temptation to regard Plato as describing Greek society rather than recommending its reform . . .”²³ In his view, “The main reason for Hegel’s failure to criticise Plato’s state effectively was perhaps his reluctance to concede that Plato was an innovator, proposing an ideal which was not put into practice.”²⁴ According to Inwood, “Plato presents and advocates an ideal society which differs in fundamental ways from all existing Greek societies. Hegel interprets it unusually and implausibly in a different way. On his view Plato is simply giving an abstract description of the typical Greek city-state, a description which faithfully portrays its basic features and differs from it only in inessential respects.”²⁵

Joining in the conviction that Hegel viewed philosophy as a purely descriptive endeavour, Browning concludes that Hegel overlooks the counterfactual significance, the “artistic suggestiveness”,²⁶ and the “innovative, paradoxical radicalism”²⁷ of Plato’s prescriptive enterprise. In so far as he understands Hegel to have a “vision of political philosophy as necessarily backward looking and descriptive”,²⁸ Browning presents “Hegel’s picture of Plato’s political philosophy as being essentially descriptive of an actual political tradition rather than prescriptive of a novel political experiment . . .”²⁹

However, Chapter 1 showed that Hegel did not view philosophy as merely descriptive of existing arrangements, but that he also understood it as heralding historical transformation, as indicating the general direction it must take if it is to transcend existing limitations, and as thereby performing a pivotal role in the process of social transformation. Thus whereas Inwood and Browning believe that Hegel’s metaphilosophical objective must be descriptive fidelity, the preceding discussion suggests that the Hegelian criterion is closer to philosophical fecundity. Since Hegel does not view philosophy as a strictly descriptive enterprise he does not interpret Plato’s philosophy in merely descriptive terms and therefore does not misrepresent Plato. On the contrary, Hegel’s interpretation of Plato demonstrates the extent to which his metaphilosophical approach, as outlined in Chapter 1, transcends the traditional dichotomy of description and prescription.

The preceding discussion has shown that Hegel derives his own concept of freedom from Plato’s concept of justice, and thereby supports his claim that Plato’s political philosophy turned implicitly upon a principle of subjective freedom around which modern society has subsequently developed. In grasping the essence of the Greek polis, as he did particularly in his *Republic*, Plato singled out the

principle of subjective freedom as representing a challenge which the traditional order could not hope to meet and which therefore could be realized only through the deterioration of that order. Yet, it must be emphasized that Hegel develops this point only after stressing the prescriptive role of philosophy in criticizing existing political arrangements.

This insight can be reached through philosophy alone. Revolutions take place in a state without the slightest violence when the insight becomes universal . . . Thus the main thought which forms the groundwork of Plato's *Republic* is the same which is to be regarded as the principle of the common Greek morality, namely, that established morality has in general the relation of the substantial, and therefore is maintained as divine. This is without question the fundamental determination. The determination which stands in contrast to this substantial relation of the individual to established morality, is the subjective will of the individual, reflective morality. This exists when individuals, instead of being moved to action by respect and reverence for the institutions of the state and of the fatherland, from their own convictions, and after moral deliberation, come of themselves to a decision, and determine their actions accordingly. This principle of subjective freedom is a later growth, it is the principle of our modern days of culture; it however, entered also into the Greek world, but as the principle of the destruction of the Greek ethical life.³⁰

Thus his insistence that Plato's *Republic* is more than utopian does not mean that Hegel has overlooked its inherent radicalism. Hegel regards Plato's exclusion of subjective freedom as rendering his *Republic* more than an empty ideal because it foreshadows real spiritual and philosophic development. According to Hegel

It is this defect which is responsible both for the misunderstanding of the deep and substantial truth of Plato's state and also for the usual view of it as a dream of abstract thinking, as what is often called a "mere ideal". The principle of the self-subsistent inherently infinite personality of the individual, the principle of subjective freedom, is denied its right in the purely substantial form which Plato gave to mind in its actuality. This principle dawned in an inward form in the Christian religion and in an external form (and therefore in one linked with abstract universality) in the Roman world. It is historically subsequent to the Greek world, and the philosophic reflection which descends to its depth is likewise subsequent to the substantial Idea of Greek philosophy.³¹

Thus the preceding re-examination of Hegel's metaphilosophy, together with his reading of Platonic justice, shows that Hegel's

interpretation of Plato has been misconstrued. Hegel's metaphilosophy transcends the traditional dichotomy of description/prescription since it views philosophy as performing the latter role in so far as it fulfils the former. Hence, Hegel did not view Plato's role as purely descriptive. Rather Hegel understood Plato to have grasped the essential nature of Greek society in such a way as to indicate its inherent limitations, and thereby anticipate that development which would occur in the course of subsequent efforts to overcome these limitations. Through its eventual integration of that same subjective freedom that Plato sought to restrict, the modern state has transformed its patterns of inclusion, exclusion, justice and freedom in a manner that contributes to its dynamism and promotes its further development. This process of development, which Hegel understands as freedom, and which draws upon modern social differentiation, is foreshadowed in Plato's organic conception of justice. Far from underestimating the "innovative, paradoxical radicalism" of Plato's work, Hegel understood it as implicitly anticipating the individualism and subjective freedom that could be realized fully only through the contributions of Christian revelation and the modern social development.

— PARADISE PRESENT AND THE — SINS OF STANDARD LOGIC

For Hegel, Christianity is concerned with the revelation and conscious development of the principle of subjective freedom that had been implicitly identified by Plato as the contradiction inherent in the Greek tradition. This it achieves through a synthesis of universal divinity with human subjectivity that elevates the individual to a position of intrinsic worth.

The resolution of the contradictions that had undermined the polis, and that had subsequently reached a crisis in the cultures of Rome and Judea,³² required a reconciliation of the finite with the infinite, the concrete particular and the absolute. In Hegel's view, the age was characterized by a spiritual craving that could be satisfied neither by the parochial and restrictively anthropomorphic pantheons of Greece and Rome, nor by the abstract and distant indeterminacy of the Jewish God.

For Hegel, the Hebrew and Greco-Roman religions were complementary emanations of Egyptian theology. On the one hand, the Jews achieved a purely spiritual, and sublimely universal conception of God, but not without removing him completely from the sensible

world, enshrouding his being and purposes in mystic indescription, and bending themselves in abject subservience before his tempestuous powers. On the other hand, the Greeks found their way to an easy familiarity with their gods, at the cost of their particularization among a multitude of suspiciously human limitations that became a target for rational criticism from the sixth century onwards. Whereas one view was abstractly universalist, the other was restrictively particularist, and therefore neither could satisfy the deeper spiritual longings of the day.

Thus on Hegel's view, the Christian revelation was implicit within the contradictions inherent in either of the complementary theologies that competed in those days along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Through an inevitability implicit in their respective limitations, God, absolute but abstract, and God, incarnate but parochial, were synthesized in a God that relied no more on anger than allegory and offered love, redemption and reconciliation, the universal God in man. It was, in essence, a vision of the whole expressed in each of its parts and the absolute totality at peace within each particular believer. But it was, in fact, a vision for which the world was not yet fully prepared.

Paradise present in the message of Jesus was, when it reverberated among the harsh conditions of the day, paradise shrouded in paradox. Hence it was paradise at a price that would enforce severe restraints on the message of Jesus and its subsequent measure in the world. In his early theological writings, Hegel considered the historical context in which Jesus presented his vision. He understood Jesus to have taught spontaneity, freedom, hope and love in a rigidly structured and staunchly legalistic society. Hebrew culture, as Hegel argued, was based on fragmentation from the moment that its founder split from his family and community, for the "first act which made Abraham the progenitor of a nation is a dissection which snaps the bonds of communal life and love".³³ Moreover, this violent bifurcation was the trait that characterized Abraham's contact with other peoples throughout his travels. According to Hegel the "same Spirit which had carried Abraham away from his kin led him through his encounters with foreign peoples during the rest of his life; this was the spirit of self-maintenance in opposition to everything - the product of his thought raised to be the unity dominant over the nature which he regarded as infinite and hostile (for the only relationship possible between hostile entities is mastery of one by the other)."³⁴ Much as the Greeks had projected their social relations

upon the universe as a whole, the harsh segregation of Abraham's life reappeared in his conception of a distant, domineering and ultimately indeterminable God. "The whole world Abraham regarded as his opposite; if he did not take it as a nullity he looked upon it as sustained by a God who was alien to it. Nothing in nature was supposed to have any part in God; everything was simply under God's mastery."³⁵ Lodged at the very foundation of Jewish society and culture, this spirit of rigid segregation rendered the teachings of Jesus at once inevitable and unintelligible. The contradiction of Hebrew experience was the tragedy of Jesus, who died, in a sense, for the sins of standard logic, and who perished, in a manner reminiscent of Socrates, upon the crux of his own paradox.

By placing God within the community, Jesus sought to bring harmony, hope and reconciliation into Hebrew society. Yet his revolutionary message could not take root in that soil of hard distinctions and therefore was regarded by the community as a further source of bifurcation. Hegel argues that Jesus could neither alter nor escape the fate of his people without acquiescing in his own isolation and eventual ostracism:

either he had to make that fate his own, to bear its necessity and share its joy, to unite his spirit with his people's, but to sacrifice his own beauty, his connection with the divine, or else he had to repel his nation's fate from himself, but submit to a life undeveloped and without pleasure in itself. In neither event would his nature be fulfilled . . .³⁶

Jesus could either concede the framework of Jewish experience and work as a reformer from within, or he could remain true to himself and confront Jewish culture with a revolutionary challenge. As Hegel says, he could either scatter the sullied fragments of his own true nature, or he could cast his insight as a "splendid shadow" that would never come alive.³⁷ In the one case his efforts would have been ineffectual and in the second they would have been irrelevant. In Hegel's view, "Jesus chose the latter fate",³⁸ severing himself from the affairs of his community and confronting it as an outsider. "Thus the earthly life of Jesus was separation from reality and flight into heaven: restoration in an ideal world of the life which has been dissipated in the void."³⁹

Hegel thus sees Jesus as a failure, resplendent in the purity of a vision that precluded its own realization in the society of his day. His inability to communicate the true significance of his life and his

relationship to God had deep consequences for the subsequent course of history, for his vision was misconstrued and misrepresented by those who followed him. As a result the Christian community has never transcended what remains, in Hegel's view, an essentially Jewish conception of a deity divorced from worldly affairs. Whereas the Greeks found a home for the gods within their community, Hegel regards it as the fate of Christianity "that church and state, worship and life, piety and virtue, spiritual and worldly action cannot dissolve into one".⁴⁰ Whereas Jesus had sought to heal the rift between the worldly and the spiritual, he ultimately withdrew himself and those who followed him from the active life of the surrounding community. His inevitable confrontation with the state therefore could appear only as a contradiction, and in his withdrawal from his community, as in his passivity toward political authority, Hegel finds Jesus in contradiction with himself. In his view, Jesus

restricts himself to working on individuals and allows the fate of his nation to stand unassailed, for he cuts himself off from it and plucks his friends from its grasp. So long as Jesus sees the world unchanged, so long does he flee from it and from all connection with it. However much he collides with the entire fate of his people, still his relation to it is wholly passive, even when that attitude seems to him to be contradictory. Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, he says, when the Jews brought under discussion one aspect of their fate, namely, their liability to Roman taxation. Though it seemed to him a contradiction that he and his friends should have to pay the same tribute as was imposed on the Jews, he told Peter to make no resistance, but to pay it. His sole relationship with the state was to remain under its jurisdiction; to the consequences of subjection to this power he submitted passively, deliberately accepting the contradiction of his spirit.⁴¹

In this respect, Hegel concluded that Christianity compared unfavourably with the civic religion of the polis. Whereas the religion of a people should be at once an expression and a consecration of its collective life, Christianity was an inherently personal and private affair. Toward political action it responded either with indifference, or with an hostility that was ultimately inseparable from that hostility which the state directed toward it.

The Kingdom of God is not of this world, only it makes a great difference for that Kingdom whether this world is actually present in opposition to it . . . Hence with this (passive) relation to the state one great element in a living union is cut away, for the members of the Kingdom of God one important bond of association is snapped . . . The citizens of the Kingdom

of God become set over against a hostile state, become private persons excluding themselves from it . . . from the idea of the Kingdom of God all the relationships established in a political order are excluded; these rank infinitely lower than the living bonds within the divine group, and by such a group they can only be despised. But since the state was there and neither Jesus nor his following could annul it, the fate of Jesus and his following (which remained true to him in this matter) remains a loss of freedom, a restriction of life, passivity under the domination of an alien might which was despised . . .⁴²

This rejection of political activity resulted not only from the disappointment of Jesus at the rigidity of Jewish culture but also from the remote authoritarianism of the Roman empire in which the church developed. "The Christian community found itself in the Roman world", writes Hegel, "and in this world, the extension of the Christian religion was to take place. That community must therefore keep itself removed from all activity in the State – constitute itself a separate company, and not react against the decrees, views, and transactions of the state."⁴³

Thus, whereas Plato rejected individuality in his effort to place the polis on a new ontological foundation, Jesus sought the unification of the individual with the absolute. Yet due to existing social constraints he could give this no more than an inward, intuitive expression without direct political application. In his early theological writings, Hegel therefore argued that Jesus was forced to relinquish political efficacy in order to retain the purity of his message.

From Hegel's perspective, Plato and Jesus therefore may be viewed as complementary and equally incomplete responses to the cultural fragmentation of their respective societies – two societies which Hegel views as diverging from a common Egyptian heritage. Whereas Plato was able to reunite community and cosmos only by rejecting the new principle of individualism, Jesus was able to reconcile the individual and the absolute only by forsaking an overtly political approach. On this view, the early Christian synthesis of the gospel and Platonism was inevitable in so far as each of these compensated for the limitations of the other.

_ CONTRADICTION AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS _ IN CHRISTIAN REVELATION

Since the world of his day was not fully equipped to grasp the message of Jesus, the identity of universality and particularity came

to be associated with the extraordinary circumstances of his life and death without direct application to ordinary individuals, and without realization in society at large. Though this identification was implicit in the teachings of Jesus, as in the early doctrines of the church, its full realization required a lengthy historical process through which individuals slowly developed toward universal consciousness. This occurred not only through man's scientific control over nature, and his capacity to remake the world in his image, but through the gradual rationalization of his social relations.

It is important to Hegel that this reconciliation of absolute substance with subjectivity should manifest itself as a revolution occurring throughout the course of world history. God actualizes himself as man only through the long historical process in which man elevates himself spiritually toward God. "Thus", says Hegel, "through the process (men) accomplish that reconciliation in themselves, actualise their freedom; that is to say, they attain to the consciousness of heaven upon earth, the elevation of man to God."⁴⁴

Christianity, according to Hegel is the revelation that man is God, but that he is God only through the difficult process of his own historical development. Hence for Hegel humanity itself, and human history, is above all, the process in which its spiritual essence is actualized through the arduous negation of its own immediate, or natural form.⁴⁵

From the start, man is implicitly one with God and this is the significance of the Christian revelation. Yet this unity is not actualized so long as man remains in his natural form, subject to natural desires and impulses – at the mercy, as Hegel would say, of his immediate will. Man must struggle with himself historically to achieve this actuality, but this achievement is not to be understood in the sense of some final terminus at which he suddenly arrives. Rather it is interpreted in the sense of Aristotelian *energeia* as actualized within the very process of those struggles. In the process of his daily effort to realize that which is implicitly spiritual in himself, the universal is continuously realized, and man is one with God.⁴⁶ On the Hegelian view, God, the Idea, is this continuous activity of spiritual realization.

According to Hegel, this process of actualization and development is motivated by the profound contradiction embodied in Christianity. As he says, the "moment of Christ's actual present humanity is of immense importance to Christianity because it is the union of the most tremendous opposites".⁴⁷ Hence, Christianity is not "a simple undivided faith; for there is likewise present in it the highest negativity,

that is, the contradiction between actuality and that other world".⁴⁸ By revealing the unity of God with man, Christianity also presents to man the contradiction between his immediate, natural existence and his intrinsically spiritual essence. And it is his consciousness of this contradiction which motivates man to engage in the process of development through which he actualizes his deeper spirituality.

In revealing the implicit unity of God and man, Christianity focused human awareness on the contradiction between the natural condition of man and his ultimate universality. Substantive universality would henceforth appear to man as an other world set over against the phenomenal world of sensuality and change. In this way, the new religion finally succeeded in introducing the contradiction of subjectivity and substantive universality into ordinary discourse.

This is, for Hegel, the same dualism that can be traced back from Christianity, through Plato and the Greek tradition, to Parmenides. It had its roots in the dichotomy which first appeared in Parmenidean thought as the unbridgeable rift between the eternal reality of the Way of Truth and the changing, perceptual Way of Seeming. We have seen that throughout the subsequent history of Greek thought, a variety of thinkers – the pluralists, Sophists, Socrates, etc. – reacted against various aspects of this dualism without ever grasping it in its essential form. Because they consequently addressed the symptoms and not the source of its fundamental contradiction, none of these thinkers was successful in giving that dualism a final resolution and most of them succeeded only in contributing to its proliferation and further advancement. In this way, the contradiction was developed and reproduced through an increasing fragmentation of the traditional Greek world view. Finally, in the twilight of that declining age, Plato succeeded in comprehending the essence of traditional Greek life, and thereby grasped the fundamental contradiction between its innocent universality and the principle of subjectivity. Thereafter, through the influence of Platonism on the development of Christianity, this contradiction became painfully explicit and present to the consciousness of everyman. According to Hegel, "the new religion made the intelligible world of philosophy, the world of common consciousness".⁴⁹ He seconds Tertullian's observation that "Even children in our day have a knowledge of God which the wisest men of antiquity alone attained to."⁵⁰

Drawing upon Platonism, Christianity appropriated this philosophical and previously esoteric comprehension and presented it figuratively in a form accessible to common consciousness. Thus

for the first time through Christianity, man was able to confront and self-consciously struggle with this fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, God was one with man in Christ, but on the other hand the individual understood this as a contradiction, for in his rude and natural form, he could not conceive himself as godly. Hence, this unity was transferred into an other world – as a spiritual reunion in the afterlife – and it was, according to Hegel, the painful contradiction between these worlds that goaded man to attempt to elevate himself and the world around him in accordance with the spiritual standards.

Culture here begins from the most terrible contradiction, and this has to be by it resolved. It is a kingdom of pain, but of purgatory, for that which is in pain is spirit and not animal, and spirit does not die, but goes forth from its grave. The two sides of this contradiction are really thus related to one another in such a way that it is the spiritual which has to reign over the (natural).⁵¹

By raising it to consciousness and holding it before all men, Christianity renders its evident dualism all the more painful and present. Yet, in its elevation to consciousness, this contradiction is also rendered soluble, and the new religion further suggests that resolution in the revelation that God has particularized himself as man, and that all men are therefore implicitly elevated to universality. Nevertheless it is a revolution that can be actualized only through a difficult process of spiritual development that begins with the elevation of that contradiction to consciousness and culminates in the elevation of consciousness to a self-conscious recognition of its own higher level universality.

In the course of this development, man must come to know himself as God, which is to say that he must achieve self-consciousness. But this self-consciousness will be impossible so long as he conceives of God figuratively as a remote, unreachable Father in heaven. He cannot be self-conscious so long as he conceives of God as static, self-complacent universality or as a substantial perfection contrasting with his own subjective inadequacy. The significance of the Christian revelation, at least on Hegel's view, is that God unites with man by actively particularizing himself in human form, while man is thereby elevated to divinity. Yet man does not become one with God until he understands God as this process in which God particularizes himself in man, thereby expressing and actualizing himself in individual form. He does not become self-conscious until he understands the infinite,

not as something existing in Eleatic stasis, in isolation from the finite, but rather as a methodical activity which differentiates itself as a series of particular events, and hence he does not become one with God until he understands God as the process of his own becoming. According to Hegel

the conception of mind must be made fundamental, and it must now be shown that history is the process of mind itself, the revelation of itself from its first superficial, enshrouded consciousness, and the attainment of this standpoint of its free self-consciousness, in order that the absolute command of mind, "Know thyself," may be fulfilled.⁵²

— THE INNER TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY —

The Christian contribution to the development of self-consciousness can be interpreted in terms of OM. In so far as Jesus represented God in human form, he demonstrated that the whole is also a part of itself, or that a particular man is also universal being. Ultimately, it is the contradiction of an absolute totality which is also one of the parts that it contains that is expressed in traditional mysteries of Christian doctrine, as it is in the logical antinomies of the twentieth century. In either case, initial efforts to grasp the significance of this contradiction have led to the differentiation of whole and part at distinct hierarchical levels. In the case of the antinomies, this is illustrated by Russell's proposal of the theory of types, wherein class and member were restricted to separate typological levels. In Christian doctrine, it appears as the separation of Heaven and Earth.

For Hegel, the Christian revelation truly signifies that God is man. Yet the application of this truth to ordinary living men, each of whom is defined by an ungodly list of particular limitations resulted in the most repugnant of contradictions. Hence, it is, on the one hand, projected safely into the distant past (that is, of Jesus' earthly presence), where personal peculiarities are easily obscured, while on the other hand, it is circumvented by the separation of heaven and earth, where individual sins are redressed and effaced (a circumvention which functions thereafter with no less ambiguity than does Russell's distinction of types).

In either case, it was the appearance of an anomaly, a contradiction, that motivated the differentiation of these levels. For logicians, such anomalies were sets that include themselves as members, such as the set of everything. For Christians it was Jesus, the man who was God.

Yet logic, which has sought to evade the antinomies, differs from religion in so far as the latter takes its task to be the elevation of this contradiction to consciousness. This it does by means of figurative or allegorical presentation that Hegel describes as *Vorstellung*, or picture-thinking. It is ultimately the role of philosophy to provide a rational interpretation of metaphorical religious truths, as does Hegel in the following passage on cosmological self-containment.

The infinite being, filling the immeasurability of space, exists at the same time in a definite space, as is said, for instance, in the verse.

“He whom all heavens’ heaven ne’er contained
Lies now in Mary’s womb.”⁵³

On this view, much of the controversy that has traditionally surrounded the virgin birth has missed the point. Its significance from an Hegelian perspective is that the absolute totality is contained within each of its parts – not just in Mary or Jesus, but in every woman and man. It is by reflecting upon the paradox of the virgin birth that men and women become conscious of themselves as God.

The problem then is the dogmatic attire in which Christianity has been draped. In his essay “The positivity of the Christian religion”, Hegel attributes these restrictions to what he describes as the stale legalism of the Jewish society in which the message of Jesus was initially presented. Elsewhere he attributes it more broadly to the limited and parochial natures of other societies of that day. Whereas such dogmatic elements tend to undermine the force of Christian mysteries, whether by ritualistic circumvention or authoritative reassurance, it is by a full appreciation of these paradoxes and the force of their contradiction – much in the manner of a Buddhist koan – that the believer comes to understand himself as God,⁵⁴ or in Hegel’s words

The concept of individuality includes opposition to its infinite variety and also inner association with it. A human being is an individual life insofar as he is to be distinguished from all the elements and from the infinity of individual beings outside himself. He exists only in that the totality of life is divided into parts, he himself being one part and all the rest the other parts; and he again exists only inasmuch as he is no part at all, and nothing is separated from him.⁵⁵

In Hegel’s view this insight is not only the inner truth of Christianity but the solution of that contradiction which was already

driving historical development five centuries before the birth of Jesus. Neither God and man, nor substance and subjectivity, nor Parmenidean truth and appearance, are to be conceived as opposites occupying two separate levels of existence. The true God is rather that which encompasses and unifies both of these levels, the God in every man.

Thus it is an actual self, an "I," the absolute universal, the concrete universal, that is God; and also the absolute opposite of this determination, the clearly finite as it exists in space and time, but this finite determined in unity with the eternal as self. The absolute comprehended as concrete, the unity of these two absolutely different determinations, is the true God; each of them is abstract, and either of them taken by itself is thus not the true God. The fact that the concrete is thus known to men in this perfection as God brings about the whole revolution that has taken place in the world's history. The Trinity is thereby not only present in conception, which would not yet constitute the perfect concrete, but actuality is perfectly united to it.⁵⁶

The same approach is illustrated repeatedly in Hegel's philosophical interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Once again, the paradox involves a unity of opposites which Hegel understands as describing an ontological activity of self-determination. The process begins with a condition of undifferentiated universality, described by Hegel as the self-identity of the homogeneous infinite, which determines itself as a particular in opposition to this universal. This opposition is, however, annulled in so far as the particular subject is itself the universal.⁵⁷

In Christ, as Hegel explains it, God and man are revealed as one; the absolute is revealed as the particular. In accord with his interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity, as in accord with OM, Hegel conceives of God as particularizing himself as man and thereby actualizing himself as God only through this act of self-determination.

– KINGDOM AND COMMUNITY –

In Hegel's view, this Christian self-consciousness is achieved partly through the third term of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, conceived as the spiritual community. Man begins his development toward this self-consciousness partly through his relations with other members of the church. Hegel underscores Christian assurance that wherever two or more are gathered in spiritual communion, God is present in the relations occurring between them.⁵⁸ God is not to be imagined as an

abstract universality existing in isolation from man, but is rather to be understood in terms of concrete social relations and communal interaction. God is not associated with an other world so much as with a spiritual community which is expressed and realized temporally through the activities and relations of particular individuals.

And while Christ said “My kingdom is not of this world”, the contradiction between the heaven and earth – the painful inadequacy of this world in relation to that other – became an injunction to man to realize that spiritual community in the present. Thus while the church initially focused on the higher realm, awaiting the demise of the temporal, it gradually became more worldly. This development (which appeared, at first, as a desacralization of the spiritual occurring, for example, in the form of ecclesiastical corruption) continued until the Reformation anchored the spiritual community firmly in temporal affairs, and rendered the universal compatible with the political community in a way that it had not been since the deterioration of the traditional Greek culture. But as the divine community is brought to earth, so must the temporal community be rendered according to spiritual standards. And for Hegel, this implies that the political community should undergo a historical process of rationalization in the course of human development. Christianity signifies the realization of man as God, but this “realization has and ought to be in the present world. In other words, the laws, customs, constitutions and all that belongs to the actuality of spiritual consciousness should be rational.”⁵⁹ Yet this temporal rationalization does not connote a simple return to the Greek city-state, since the realization of the spiritual community requires that it incorporates the principle of subjective freedom as this has been developed in Christian thought.

The kingdom of rational actuality is quite a different one, and must be organised and developed thinkingly and with understanding; the moment of self-conscious freedom of the individual must maintain its rights against objective truth and objective command. This, then, is the true and actual objectivity of mind in the form of an actual temporal existence as state, just as Philosophy is the objectivity of thought which comes to us in the form of universality. Such objectivity cannot be in the beginning, but must come forth after being worked upon by mind and thought.⁶⁰

This reference to philosophy as, previously suggested, is important to Hegel since he sees philosophy as ultimately providing a thorough

explication of those truths implicit in the Christian revelation. The deeper significance of Christianity requires that

it should be worked out for thought, and be taken up into thinking knowledge, and realised in this; and thus that it should attain to reconciliation, having the divine Idea within itself, and that the riches of thought and culture belonging to the philosophic Idea should become united to the Christian principle. For the philosophic Idea is the Idea of God, and thought has the absolute right of reconciliation, or the right to claim that the Christian principle should correspond with thought.⁶¹

In order to accomplish this, however, thought must undergo a period in which it moves away from Christianity. We do not really know our home until after we have left it, and it is much the same for the achievement of philosophical self-consciousness. So long as it confines itself to the figurative or pictorial representation of the religious consciousness, thought will stagnate within the endless trivialities and spiritual culs-de-sac which characterized scholastic philosophy. In order to attain ultimately a deeper understanding of these truths, thought must free itself by rejecting this mode of presentation. This is the task of modern philosophy, but Hegel emphasizes that while this philosophy will appear as antithetical to Christian doctrine, it will eventually lead back to a deeper understanding of the same truths contained within the Christian revelation.⁶²

— FRAGMENTATION IN EARLY — MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

The proliferation of fragmentation in the modern era is continuous with that of the classical and Christian periods in so far as it turns on the same principle of subjective freedom and moral autonomy that undermined the life of the polis and shattered its unreflective union of cosmos, community and individual. Whereas Plato was prepared to sacrifice individualism for a reunion of the political community and the absolute, and whereas the Christian tradition had focused on the synthesis of God and man to the exclusion of the present world, modern political thought concerned itself primarily with the relationship between the individual and the temporal order, and increasingly was prepared to ignore the orientation of either to broader cosmological issues. In this way, the modern tradition responded to the limitations of the Christian view. Yet its response was no less partial and fragmented in its rejection of the absolute than had been the

Christian tradition in its neglect of the temporal order. Together, Platonic, Christian and modern traditions may be viewed as a set of incomplete and complementary responses to the collapse of Greek civilization.

Modern political theory began with an effort to separate political thought from theology, and thereafter has been concerned either with the reformulation of political universality without reference to God, or with a reformulation of political practice without reliance on such conceptions of universality. At every turn, this tradition has responded to modern forms of social and cultural fragmentation, and as it has developed many theorists have portrayed themselves as addressing the practical aftermath of preceding theories. Thus fragmentation may be seen as proliferating through the theory and practice of modern politics in much the same way that it did in the ancient world. For example, the liberal tradition has been blamed for social and political problems that have given rise to at least four theoretical countertraditions. These include conservatism, Marxism, fascism and those organicist or collectivist modifications of liberalism that have enticed theorists ranging from Rousseau and T. H. Green to contemporary communitarian writers. Hegel's metaphilosophical evaluation of his own system is supported by the fact that he regarded modern social fragmentation as a fundamental philosophical problem, and by the fact that his response to that problem has been a basis for the nineteenth- and twentieth-century elaborations of each of these countertraditions.

Modern political theory may be considered as arising from fragmentation in Renaissance Italian society, and more specifically from Machiavelli's rejection of classical and Christian norms in an effort to adapt political inquiry to the pressing issues of his day. His approach derives historically from the disintegration of the Christian world view, and the absence of an alternative that would have reintegrated politics within an encompassing totality. His modernism follows from his commitment to political realism; from the analytic pragmatism of his methodology; and from his refusal to recognize any form of political universality that is not an immediate locus of power. Apart from naked political power, Machiavelli found human existence characterized by no overarching principle, and was profoundly impressed with its incoherence and discontinuity. History, for example, was neither a smooth continuum nor a meaningful process, but an unstable and treacherous path whereupon constant vigilance could only forestall inevitable disintegration and sudden collapse, a

passage wherein insight could scarcely alleviate the cyclical labour of recovery.⁶³ Similarly, religion, art, business, private and public life were irrevocably discrete activities for Machiavelli, with neither an underlying principle of unification nor an overarching significance.⁶⁴

Hobbes was so deeply influenced by the thought of the Italian Renaissance that it is possible to view his philosophy as an effort to apply its scientific methodology toward a systemization of its political theory. The former he borrowed intact from Galileo and his Paduan School; the latter he borrowed in part from Machiavelli. The Machiavellian approach had a natural appeal for Hobbes since both theorists were motivated by their concern about the fragmentation of their respective societies. As Plato's political philosophy was motivated by the decline of the polis; as Augustine's was spurred by the fall of Rome; and as Machiavelli's followed the fragmentation of Italy; so Hobbes claimed to be inspired by his "grief for the present calamities of my country".⁶⁵ His *Leviathan*, published in 1651 and "occasioned by the disorders of the present time", was particularly concerned with the contemporary crisis of ecclesiastical authority, and was intended as a universal solution to rebellion and civil war.

Hobbes intended his political theory as a component of a comprehensive philosophical system based upon his vision of the physical world as a purely mechanical system consisting of material bodies in motion. All knowledge therefore must be based upon geometry and mechanics of material bodies, which consequently formed the base of Hobbes' system. These conclusions were extended to individuals through a mechanistic physiology and psychology, and to social and political bodies on an egoistic theory of social atomism. This mechanistic approach to politics had a deep influence on the course of subsequent political thought. The scientific modes of thought at the foundation of Hobbes' political philosophy gave rise to a model of atomic individualism, which (1) displaced classical and Christian collectivist ideals; (2) was accepted by the subsequent liberal tradition; and (3) was taken by Burke, de Maistre and Hegel as the target of their attacks.

Yet in the aftermath of the Copernican revolution, while experimental physics marched from one triumph to the next, and while the empire of mathematics expanded beyond all expectations, a proud natural philosophy distinguished itself from moral philosophy, much as it had done before in ancient Greece, and new conceptions of the cosmos displayed an encroaching moral indifference. Under the sway of Galileo, Hobbes' conception of natural law showed traces of this

indifference and of the distance that gradually would come to separate cosmos and community. Whereas Grotius had applied natural laws on behalf of a fundamentally sociable humanity, Hobbes claimed to show that the same precepts were binding on any man who was at once rational and fearful of death. What earlier natural law philosophers had grounded in an organicist conception of cosmos and community, Hobbes attributed to his own mechanistic psychology. Natural law was not without theological connections, but these connections were no longer crucial since the agent might arrive at those laws by reasoning from the egoistic precepts of his own psychology. And whereas the laws of nature may have been divine in origin, they did not provide an effective basis for moral conduct until after their interpretation by an earthly authority (that is, the sovereign). The connection between man and the universe, which had long since surrendered the immediacy of the polis to the mediation of Christianity and natural law, was henceforth increasingly remote and irrelevant, while issues of moral philosophy were (with some exceptions) increasingly matters of convenience, convention and individual psychology.

Hobbes' contribution to the secularization of political theory culminated in the stark individualism that made his philosophy the most revolutionary of its age. It is the thoroughly modern element in Hobbes that provided the basis for liberalism, established the theoretical pre-eminence of self-interest, and anticipated the spirit of *laissez-faire*. In contrast with both the classical and feudal traditions, which viewed the individual as an expression of an organic community, the individual was considered prior to his social relations, and as subsequently constructing an artificial political order as a matter of convenience.

There is a dialectical irony in the fact that Hobbes' absolutism follows from the extremity of his individualism. His concept of sovereignty is the complement of his social atomism, for without the overwhelming force of the Leviathan there would be nothing to check the egoism, greed and private interest that his theory postulates. Having once dissolved the rich variety of communal associations, there is little, or nothing, to mediate between individuals and the power of the state. It is a theory in keeping with an age that witnessed the wreck of those traditional bonds that had once anchored the individual within a communal life that could not have been separated into its economic, religious, social and political strands. As with Machiavelli, the early modern period found it

difficult to accept the audacity of Hobbes's exposition and the austerity of his conclusions. Yet the same age that rejected his absolutist arguments fastened upon his individualist assumptions. Indeed, many of the central themes of liberalism were already present in Hobbes' thought.

These themes were cleansed of their Hobbesian absolutism by John Locke, whose political theory provides a cornerstone for liberalism. Locke accepted the prominence of self-interest and the hegemony of human desire; he brought private property into its own; promoted science and technology; and to individualism he added limited government, consent and toleration. His political philosophy was particularly influential in so far as it was society, rather than the political order, that became the focus of Locke's attention. He thereby contributed to the distinction between the public and the private, the universal and particular, advancing a trend that began in the decline of the polis and increasingly formed a basis for modernity. As enshrined in liberal ideology, these ideas served to legitimize social changes necessary for the development of large-scale commerce and industry. Liberal ideals were appropriated by the commercial class that developed in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and achieved pre-eminence with the triumph of this class in the socio-economic reorganization of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

However, the development of liberal economies over a series of generations resulted in widespread and pervasive forms of social and political fragmentation. These were exacerbated by the dislocation of populations, the disruption of communal associations and traditional value systems, increasing religious diversity and the separation of church and state, followed by economic stratification and the entrenchment of class divisions. In so far as the new social order was primarily a class order it was not an integrated community, but a by-product of individual competition. Unlike the feudal estates, it was not enshrined in the law or institutionalized in the state. In this sense, the condition of modern society was more fragmented than its predecessor.

– MORAL SUBJECTIVITY –

The fragmentation of modern society was further advanced by Humean scepticism. In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, which he subtitled "An Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects", Hume undertook a careful epistemological analysis

which appeared, in effect, to deprive systems of natural law of further pretensions toward scientific or logical validity. Natural law was the last attempt to link man and cosmos by means of the argument from design, with its assurance that the laws of the cosmos, physical and social, were established by a benign providence for the benefit of man. The consequence of Hume's analysis was the destruction of natural law as a foundation for political philosophy, and the end of efforts on the part of most political theorists to link their discussion of individual and community to metaphysical and cosmological issues. Theories about the cosmos were separated from theories about the community and its inhabitants by an expanding epistemological gulf, which could be surmounted only through the flight of an esoteric transcendentalism, as with Kant, or, as with the nineteenth-century positivists, through the rigours of a scientific methodology restricted to a secular priesthood, a priesthood which prominently excluded metaphysicians and ordinary citizens. From this point onward the philosophical connection between man and the universe was tenuously epistemological, and gradually even epistemology grew to be overextended and inadequate to the task. The split was only exacerbated by the success of natural scientific explanations in accounting for the physical universe. As cosmos and community increasingly were conceived in abstraction from one another, individual lives were progressively alienated from both. Yet most subsequent attempts to resolve social fragmentation focused upon the community and the individual in abstraction from a cosmological overview, and thereby attempted to resolve social fragmentation within a conceptual framework that was itself fragmented. Such efforts were self-contradictory, and therefore self-defeating, in so far as they attempted to surmount one form of fragmentation while presupposing another, and consequently contributed to the proliferation of cultural fragmentation. Contradictions of this sort appeared in Kant's response to Humean scepticism.

Hume's critique had shaken Kant from his dogmatic complacency with Wolff's theory of natural law. Kant sought to rescue rational morality from Humean scepticism by demonstrating that moral principles could be derived, not from the objective rationality of natural law, but from that rationality inherent in the subject. This strategy had the inadvertent effect of further isolating the new ethically self-subsistent subject from the cosmos. The latter was related to the former, in Kantian philosophy, only through an

epistemological connection which was tenuous in any case, and which Hegel found to be contradictory.

Yet if Kantian moral philosophy contributed to the isolation of the individual from the cosmos, it also allowed full scope to the development of subjective freedom, and did so precisely because it founded moral theory on the freedom that Kant associated with the inherent rationality of the subject. By formally proclaiming the ethical self-sufficiency of the individual will, Kant carried to its logical extreme the individualist position inaugurated by Hobbes and Locke. Yet he also tried to deny that individual sovereignty may be extended arbitrarily to ethical activity by arguing that a universal content follows from its form.

Kant shifted the focus of moral debate from the ends that are chosen to the subject's capacity to choose them, a capacity that is prior to any end and that is definitively characteristic of subjectivity. Thus the priority of the right over the good is dependent upon the primacy of the subject to its ends. But how is the latter priority to be established? It cannot be supported empirically for two reasons. First, an empirical foundation would compromise the moral autonomy of the will. Second, we have seen that Kant is committed to the position that there can be no experience of subjectivity.

With a dialectical turn, however, the latter objection to an empirical defence becomes the basis for Kant's transcendental argument. The second chapter discussed Kant's conclusion that the subject can know itself only as an object of experience. But 'Beyond this character of himself as a subject made up, as it is of mere appearances he must suppose there to be something else which is its ground – namely his Ego as this may be constituted in itself.'⁶⁶ The transcendental subject [that is, the subject in itself], once again, is that which unifies our diverse perceptions within a single consciousness. It is 'the synthetic function', as Hegel says, 'which brings the manifold into a unity'.⁶⁷ It is not my particularity, in so far as I experience myself as a determinate object among other determinate objects, but my subjective universality which provides the connection among my various experiences. As it exists in itself, the subject is not that which is known, but that which does the knowing, and while it therefore cannot be known, it must be presupposed as a condition for knowing anything else.

As a particular object of experience, according to Kant, I belong to the sensible world where my actions are determined by the laws of physics. But as the subject of experience I inhabit a supersensible world, wherein I am capable of freedom and moral autonomy: "for to be independent of determinations by causes in the sensible world

(and this is what reason must always attribute to itself) is to be free".⁶⁸ In this respect, Kantian philosophy involves a radical separation of the moral subject from the physical universe. Yet the significance of the moral situation derives from the subject's joint participation in both of these worlds. Were he strictly rational, then all of his actions would conform with the principle of autonomy, and morality would be meaningless. Were he strictly sensuous then all of his actions would be determined by the laws of nature and would be as morally irrelevant as those of the planets.

The same analysis of subjectivity supports Kant's political theory. Subjective universality is the basis of subjective freedom; which is the basis of moral autonomy; which is, in turn, the proper basis for the organization of society. Government must be grounded upon universal principles which do not presuppose any particular conception of the good. Any other arrangement is incompatible with subjective universality, since it fails to allow for moral autonomy, and treats individuals as determinate objects, rather than as self-determining subjects. It is ironic that Kantian ethical and political theory, based as they are upon subjective freedom, should be inseparable from epistemology in a way that ethics and epistemology had not been inseparable since Plato.

Hegel's influential critique of Kant's moral theory is outlined in his early essay *On the Scientific Way of Treating Natural Laws*, presented at length in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and finally summarized in *HP* and in the *PR*. In *HP* Hegel attributes the self-determination of the content of consciousness to the inherently self-contradictory structure of self-consciousness.⁶⁹ He then remarks that it is the self-consistency of the Kantian self that renders it useless as a source of moral content: "The universal, the non-contradiction of self, is without content, something which comes to be reality in the practical sphere just as little as in the theoretical."⁷⁰ Though Hegel praises Kant for giving "prominence to the pure unconditioned self-determination of the will as the root of duty", he contends that if this is based on consistency rather than contradiction this principle must remain an empty formalism.⁷¹

of course, material may be brought in from outside and particular duties may be arrived at accordingly, but if the definition of duty is taken to be the absence of contradiction, formal correspondence with itself . . . then no transition is possible to the specification of particular duties nor, if some such particular content for acting comes under consideration, is

there a criterion in that principle for deciding whether it is or is not a duty. On the contrary, by this means any wrong or immoral line of conduct may be justified.⁷²

For example, there is nothing unacceptable about a universal maxim permitting theft, for whereas theft may be viewed as a contradiction of a concept of property rights, there is nothing necessarily contradictory about the absence of property. Theft and murder pose contradictions only if property and life are presupposed as values. But as Hegel observes, it is just this presupposition of values that the Kantian approach prohibits.⁷³ Kant's noumenal self is revealed as a purely abstract universality incapable of determining its own ethical content. Thus, Kantian moral theory is self-contradictory⁷⁴ in so far as it advertises a universalist foundation sufficient for the derivation of particular content, while inadvertently importing that content a priori. This contradiction ultimately can be traced to the radical fragmentation of the Kantian subject from community and cosmos. Taken in abstraction from these totalities, the noumenal self is incapable of generating moral content without surreptitiously presupposing ethical factors such as the conventions and laws of a community whose content is ultimately inseparable from physical and biological preconditions.

– THE PROLIFERATION OF CULTURAL FRAGMENTATION –

The preceding chapter considered how an unreflective harmony of community and consciousness was shattered by the discovery of subjective freedom. The present chapter has argued that the same process of cultural fragmentation that can be traced from the rise of Eleatic philosophy through the decline of the polis has proliferated through those classical, Christian and modern responses that have fruitlessly sought to curtail it. Echoing thus along the underside of Hegel's metaphilosophy, fragmentation, too, has proliferated through a self-referential reciprocity operating between diverging forms of cultural bifurcation and the philosophical rejoinders that these have engendered. Historically, this is because each of these philosophical responses has begun by accepting the encroaching parameters of a fragmented world view, and has thereby precluded itself from any approach that was not a purveyor of further fragmentation. From an Hegelian perspective, fragmentation has spread through Western culture because all attempts to resolve it have been, themselves,

fragmented. It has proliferated in so far as attempts to understand it, and to instill some form of integration, have been based upon conceptions of universality which were themselves incomplete.

As Plato attempted to suppress subjective consciousness, and as Jesus ignored the temporal order, so has modern political theory progressively forsaken the absolute. It has followed this trend from Machiavelli's rejection of classical and Christian virtues, through the rationalization, mechanization and subsequent rejection of natural law by Hobbes and Hume respectively. Modern political theory has separated cosmos and community through the psychologism of Hobbes, the scepticism of Hume and the subjectivism of Kant, as well as through the influence of each of these upon subsequent ideological traditions.

The history of Western political thought has been characterized by the proliferation of fragmentation, spreading through society as a result of theoretical attempts to resolve it; then spreading through that theoretical tradition, itself, as various schools diverged in opposition to one another. It has spread until that discipline which traditionally sought a universal foundation for social integration has become a post-modernist celebration of particularism.

– NOTES –

1. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2 p. 29.
2. Ibid., pp. 31, 57.
3. Ibid., pp. 38, 45, 56, 62–3.
4. Ibid., pp. 98–9.
5. Ibid., p. 109 (emphasis added).
6. Ibid., p. 111.
7. Ibid., p. 109.
8. Ibid., pp. 109–10
9. Ibid., p. 107
10. Ibid., p. 99.
11. Ibid., p. 93.
12. Ibid., p. 100.
13. Ibid., pp. 103–4.
14. Ibid., p. 105.
15. Ibid., p. 104.
16. Ibid., p. 93.
17. Ibid., p. 105.
18. Foster, *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*, p. 57.
19. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, p. 104.
20. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 91–2.
21. Ibid., pp. 49–50, also see p. 56.

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22. Ibid., p. 113.
 23. Inwood, "Hegel, Plato and Greek *Sittlichkeit*", in Pelczynski (ed.), *The State and Civil Society*, p. 54.
 24. Ibid.
 25. Inwood, *Hegel*, p. 504.
 26. Browning, "Hegel's Plato: the owl of Minerva and a fading political tradition", p. 475.
 27. Ibid., p. 484.
 28. Ibid., p. 485.
 29. Ibid., p. 476.
 30. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 98–9.
 31. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, §185.
 32. See Plant, *Hegel: An Introduction*, pp. 56–75.
 33. Hegel, "The spirit of Christianity and its fate", in *Early Theological Writings*, p. 185.
 34. Ibid., pp. 185–6.
 35. Ibid., p. 187.
 36. Ibid., pp. 285–6.
 37. Ibid., p. 286.
 38. Ibid.
 39. Ibid., p. 287.
 40. Ibid., p. 301.
 41. Ibid., p. 283.
 42. Ibid., p. 284.
 43. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 329.
 44. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 3.
 45. Ibid., p. 5.
 46. Ibid., pp. 7, 9, 10.
 47. Ibid., p. 15.
 48. Ibid., p. 24.
 49. Ibid., p. 8.
 50. Ibid.
 51. Ibid., p. 47.
 52. Ibid., p. 7.
 53. Hegel, "Fragment of a system", in *Early Theological Writings*, p. 315; verse taken by Hegel with a slight change, from a hymn by Martin Luther, beginning "Gelobet siest du Jesu Christ".
 54. See Reardon, *Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, p. 22.
 55. Hegel, "Fragment of a system", in *Early Theological Writings*, p. 310.
 56. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 4.
 57. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 323–4.
 58. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 21, 25.
 59. Ibid., pp. 21–2.
 60. Ibid., p. 22.
 61. Ibid., pp. 10–11.
 62. Hegel suggests that "theology throughout is merely what philosophy is, for this last is simply thought repeating it". (Ibid., p. 160)
 63. See Machiavelli, N., *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*, II, v.

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64. Ibid., II, Preface and II, v.
65. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. xi.
66. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 119.
67. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 437.
68. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 120.
69. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 431.
70. Ibid., p. 460.
71. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §135.
72. Ibid.
73. Hegel, *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law*, p. 76.
74. Ibid.

Consciousness, Community and Cosmos

The following discussion considers Hegel's philosophy as responding to modern cultural fragmentation and providing a framework for the reintegration of consciousness, community and cosmos. This approach is based upon OM, or upon Hegelian philosophy as interpreted in terms of advances in twentieth-century logic. OM is applied reciprocally to a reinterpretation of Hegel's political philosophy, focusing upon the development of self-consciousness as the key to understanding his conceptions of reason, freedom, *Moralität*, *Sittlichkeit* and the state. This re-examination culminates in a theory of political participation and collective responsibility, which is applied, in the next chapter, to contemporary theoretical problems.

Many commentaries have attempted the study of Hegel's political philosophy in abstraction from its logical and ontological foundations. Pelczynski, for example, maintains that "Hegel's political thought can be read, understood, and appreciated without having to come to terms with his metaphysics."¹ However, this position contrasts with that of authors² such as Rosen, who asserts that

There is no point in studying Hegel, and in fact one is not studying Hegel unless one enters very soon into the complexities of his logic. Hegel is first and foremost a logician and not a philosopher of history, a political thinker, a theologian, or a *Lebensphilosoph*. Of course, as a logician, he is all of these and more. This is because Hegel accepts the Greek conception of philosophy as the attempt to give a *logos* or discursive account of the Whole . . . I venture to assert that none of his writings or lectures can be read in a proper manner without a grasp of the main tenets of his logic.³

Other writers have sought to rescue Hegel from himself by adopting a more conciliatory position. Tunick, for instance, has attempted

to “agree with Pelczynski but acknowledge Rosen’s point, and pay due respect to the texts, by calling attention to the fact that the Hegel I appropriate is a nonfoundationalist, non-metaphysical, that is rehabilitated Hegel”.⁴ But a lobotomized absolute idealist may be less offensive without being less obscure. Consider Wood’s attempt to walk the razor’s edge.

The Hegel who lives and speaks to us is not a speculative logician and idealist metaphysician but a philosophical historian, a political and social theorist . . . This is not necessarily to contradict the assertion that we cannot understand Hegel’s social and political concerns without reference to his speculative metaphysics. But we are likely to miss the connection between the two if (with Hegel) we suppose that Hegelian social thought is *grounded* in Hegelian metaphysics, and conclude that speculative logic is a propaedeutic to Hegel’s theory of modern society.⁵

Ilting sympathizes with readers who have been deterred by a “logical mysticism” teeming notoriously with metaphysical exotica “such [as] a self-propelled motion of the Idea . . . Consequently, it seems perfectly understandable that the vast majority of commentaries on Hegel’s political philosophy should simply ignore what appears to be its fantastic wrappings.”⁶ Nevertheless Ilting joins a number of other German writers⁷ in his rejection of this approach:

Against this we must, of course, set the fact that Hegel himself rejects any such separation of thought and presentation, of content and form; it is precisely “unity of form and content” that he claims for his philosophy. As Hegel himself sees it, the truly philosophical element in his *Philosophy of Right* is just that dialectical form of presentation which is consistently ignored in most commentaries on his political philosophy.⁸

At the beginning of his introduction to *PR* Hegel states that “subject-matter of the philosophical science of right is the Idea of right, i.e. the concept of right together with the actualisation of this concept”.⁹ The content of political philosophy is not “extraneous material culled from elsewhere”,¹⁰ but the form of the Idea as it is actualized through the self-determination of the concept. This does not mean that the form of the Idea is merely the organizing principle for Hegel’s presentation in *PR*, for Hegel clearly states that the conceptual development of *PR* is intended to find empirical expression.

The determinations of the concept in the course of its development are from one point of view themselves concepts, but from another they take the form of existents, since the concept is in essence Idea. The series of concepts which this development yields is therefore at the same time a series of shapes of experience, and philosophic science must treat them accordingly.¹¹

Hegel intended *PR* to reflect the form of the Idea as it is realized in the content of political life. In other words, *PR* is neither an abstract imposition of logical principles on extraneous empirical data nor a disdainfully formalist exercise. Instead it is Hegel's account of the ontological foundation of political practice. Hegel understood *PR* as an expression of the form of the Idea in modern political life, and the discovery of the movement of the concept in the historical development of the community. In accord with his understanding of his own political philosophy, I shall argue that the self-containment of the Idea provides a basis for an interpretation that avoids many of the difficulties that commentators traditionally have associated with his views, leaving us with a clear and useful model of modern political interaction. I shall demonstrate that the inherently historicist features of this model follow from its union of content and form, in accord with Hegel's logical requirements. And I shall argue that this model avoids the traditional dichotomy of description and prescription by presenting the state as an historical process, developing through the opposition between the normative claims of its constituents and the positive socio-political arrangements existing at any particular stage in its history. I shall show that Hegel's theory of the state may be understood in terms of RU relations occurring within a political community and providing continuously for its historical transformation through the integration of substantive and subjective forms of universality.

The discussion presupposes that Hegel's political philosophy is properly interpreted in terms of his own metaphilosophy, that a reading of his philosophy of history should reflect his general views on the historical role of philosophy, and more particularly that it should consider his views on the significance of his own work. Hegel's metaphilosophy was the topic of Chapter 1, which considered Hegel's conclusion that whereas a philosophy must derive its content from its own time, it nevertheless stands beyond this content in its form.¹² In terms of OM, philosophy is the subjective universality that already occupies a new and higher historical level in so far as it

comprehends the events of its age. Hegel maintained that in so far as it grasped the essence of its age, with its inherent contradictions, such a philosophy could succeed in providing a general indication as to the direction of subsequent development occurring in response to those contradictions. Through its comprehension of existing arrangements it could focus upon the principles and priorities that would inform subsequent innovations, much as Plato's political philosophy focused on the principle of subjective freedom, which was the key to both the collapse of the polis and the development of Christian thought. In accord with these views, Hegel understood his own philosophy as analyzing the contradictions inherent in the Western tradition, and as thereby anticipating a new age of human self-consciousness.

Among these contradictions were those reviewed in the preceding chapters. They were the impetus for that long historical process that culminated in the fragmentation of modern society, the fragmentation that Hegel regarded as the essence of his age. Hegel considered his own philosophy as responding to modern fragmentation through a resolution of those contradictions; and he understood that this response must centre on the development of self-consciousness, since the ancient discovery of self-consciousness had served as the original source of that fragmentation and ever since had stood at the core of those contradictions. Thus Hegel's philosophy anticipated a new age of human self-consciousness, not only in the sense that self-awareness would increase but also in the sense that self-consciousness would provide the principle informing its development. As considered in the second chapter, and as represented in the form of SC, the structure of self-consciousness is the basis for OM, so that OM is presented as an explication of the principle of self-consciousness which Hegel regarded as the key to the contradictions of the preceding tradition, and the basis for its subsequent innovations.

Thus whereas Hegel's political philosophy drew its content generally from the political arrangements of his day (and not strictly from those of the Prussian state) it already stood beyond that content in its form. In so far as the form of Hegel's philosophy is that of self-consciousness it stands beyond his contemporary political arrangements in at least two important respects.

First, Hegel understood his work to resemble that of philosophers such as Plato in so far as it comprehends the essence of its age and thereby points toward subsequent developments occurring in response to the limitations of his time. In accord with OM, Hegel's system is understood as an expression of philosophical self-consciousness

occupying a higher level universality which exceeds determinations of its content. Hence we might expect that Hegel's political philosophy involves certain concepts and principles which would not have been fully realized in his day, but which would nevertheless inform those subsequent political developments occurring in response to inadequacies in those arrangements. Much like subjective freedom in Plato's *Republic*, these concepts and principles may not always be fully compatible with the content of Hegel's political philosophy, nor with such institutions and practices as were generally available in Hegel's day for the illustration of his views. This is because this deeper outlook was formulated by Hegel in response to the contradictions and limitations that he perceived in those institutions and practices in so far as they reflected the fragmentation of modern society. Again like subjective freedom in Plato's *Republic* they are principles and ideas that are sometimes more at home with later political developments, and are thus of our own day at least as much as they were of Hegel's.

But secondly, Hegel understood his philosophy to differ from that of his predecessors in so far as it was the first to comprehend not only the essence of a particular historical epoch but also the universal method of historical development, the method that transcends the content of any given period in so far as it provides for the generation of all determinate content. His philosophy describes a process through which all political arrangements eventually are revealed as limited and inadequate, and offers a conception of politics and the state as the historical activity of its own continuous transformation and self-transcendence.

This is not to suggest that the form of Hegel's philosophy is separate from its content for we have seen that the content of the Idea is its form.¹³ But its form is its content in the sense that its form is the process in which the Idea continuously determines itself as its own content and continuously transcends each of its determinations in turn.

This interpretation avoids many of those difficulties that have characterized the literature surrounding Hegel's political philosophy. Was Hegel, for instance, apologizing for the Prussian state, describing an ideal political system or presenting a rationalization of existing institutions? The first two possibilities have been discredited, and are patently at odds with Hegel's metaphilosophy. Yet the third, and presently more popular, interpretation has not been sufficiently distinguished from the former two; for exactly what is a rationalization if it is neither an apology nor a prescription? On the one hand, if

rationalization results in nothing more than reconciliation, then how does it differ from apology? On the other hand, if rationalization is at least implicitly reform, then what distinguishes it from prescription? While these poles traditionally have divided the Hegelian left and right, they are united within the present interpretation, in so far as Hegel's metaphilosophy has been found to transcend the traditional dichotomy of description and prescription. Hegel's political philosophy is non-utopian in so far as it focuses upon a comprehension of existing arrangements. But neither is it conservative, for this philosophical comprehension provides an implicit critique in so far as it focuses upon the contradictions and limitations in these arrangements and thereby looks beyond them to developments they impel. Thus, Hegel's political philosophy may be regarded as a rationalization only if reason is understood as a process of historical development. It is a rationalization which is neither utopian, prescriptive, conservative nor arbitrary in so far as it points beyond its comprehension of existing political arrangements to their subsequent transformation.

For example, consider Plamenatz's interpretation, which concedes that the Prussian state differed from its Hegelian counterpart, but regards this difference as unimportant since "both are undemocratic". Plamenatz believes that he has identified an inconsistency in Hegel's philosophy, for whereas it implies democracy and freedom, these cannot be adequately realized within the constitutional arrangements that are described in *PR*.

Logically, democracy is just as compatible with Hegel's conception of a community of rational and free persons as is the constitutional monarchy described in the *Philosophy of Right*. Indeed, I should go further than that; I should say that Hegel's conception of the State as essentially a community of the rational and the free, though it does not entail that the fully mature State is a democracy, does powerfully suggest it.¹⁴

Plamenatz presents this observation as a criticism of Hegel, but on the present view this point is precisely the significance of Hegel's political philosophy as stipulated by his metaphilosophy. Hegel's polity is "essentially a community of the rational and free" that *does* "powerfully suggest" that "the fully mature state is a democracy". But Plamenatz fails to see that this suggestion is powerful precisely because Hegel comprehends the constitutional arrangements of his own day (in a general way, much as Plato grasps the essence of the polis without describing any particular city-state) and focuses upon

their inner principles of rationality and freedom in such a way as to indicate to us the inadequacy of their non-democratic residue, and to thereby point beyond them to a more fully democratic order. Contrary to Plamenatz's interpretation, this is not indicative of a logical inconsistency in Hegel's philosophy, but of the consistency between his political philosophy of his own metaphysical requirements.

Thus, in so far as Hegel understood himself as grasping the essence of his age along with its inherent contradictions, and as thereby anticipating developments that would occur subsequently in response to these limitations, then (1) his philosophy is properly explicated through a retrospective that includes those developments, and (2) this retrospective provides a basis for separating the wheat from the chaff in a body of philosophy that includes a rich assemblage of lecture notes, informal writings, unpublished works and layers of additions to those few volumes that were published by the philosopher himself. This is to suggest that OM is the significance of Hegel's system as Hegel intended it, and as only we can understand it.

However, Hegel's philosophy is deep enough and rich enough to have been approached from many different directions, and to provide the inspiration for many more to come. It was Hegel who said that the body of philosophy is for each generation to reinterpret from its unique perspective to fit its particular needs. Should it appear from another perspective that OM is less an interpretation of Hegel than an autonomous theoretical outlook, informed in equal measure by Hegel's philosophy and contemporary intellectual developments, then that appearance is perfectly compatible with the present discussion. For this is also a practical effort, intended to provide a foundation for the application of an extraordinarily rich and powerful body of philosophy to present needs, and thereby to provide a conceptual framework for approaching certain problems of our time.

– FRAGMENTATION AND GERMAN PHILOSOPHY –

The development of Hegel's philosophical views was motivated from the start by his concern with the fragmentation of modern society. Yet his studies led to the conclusion that fragmentation gave the impetus to philosophy in every age: "When the power of unification vanishes from the lives of men and opposing tendencies lose their living interrelation and reciprocity (*lebendige Beziehung und Wechselwirkung*) and become autonomous, the need for philosophy arises."¹⁵

He adds that "Fragmentation (*Entzweiung*) is the source of the need for philosophy."¹⁶ Philosophy responds to a "rupture in the actual world . . . the demise of a real world."¹⁷ And if fragmentation was the philosophical motive from the ancients onward, then the proliferation of fragmentation made it all the more so in Hegel's day, for "The more progress there is in culture and the more various the manifestations of life exposed to fragmentation, the greater the power of fragmentation becomes . . ."¹⁸ Thus we have seen that as fragmentation is an impetus for philosophy, so philosophy has been a cause of fragmentation in a manner consistent with the reciprocity and self-containment of consciousness and cosmos.

Yet if philosophy often begins with a loss it also involves an important gain. Fragmentation entails a separation of the self from its immediate circumstances; and this distinction is the source of philosophy's impulse and therefore its implicit prerequisite. Philosophical reflection requires that the self should have attained a distance from its surroundings, such that philosophy and subjective freedom are ultimately inseparable from each other. The Greek discovery of the latter followed inevitably from the Greek development of the former; once discovered, subjective freedom was inevitably explored and expressed through the development of philosophy. Yet both Socrates and Hegel understood that the same discovery of subjective universality that was expressed in the development of philosophy, that led to the emancipation of the self from its surroundings, and that thereby contributed to the rise of social fragmentation, also provided philosophy with its socio-therapeutic role.

Whereas the polis had depended upon an unreflective performance of duty, intellectual development ever since had favoured self-consciously critical forms of thought, which enhanced individual freedom at the cost of social fragmentation. For if the discovery of subjective universality had dissolved those parochial structures that separated Spartan from Athenian life, it had resulted paradoxically in the radical particularization of modern existence within a maze of religious, political, social, economic and other cultural distinctions. And whereas it had promised to liberate the individual, it seemed to have delivered only his enervation and estrangement. For while the universality of the subject was more confidently proclaimed, his social life was increasingly particularized, and he acquired exhilarating powers over small portions of his world only in so far as he sacrificed his conception of a meaningful totality. For Hegel, the Eleatic opposition of thought and experience had led to the differentiation of the

individual from the community, and had culminated in his subsequent isolation from the cosmos. The separation of self-consciousness from the ethical life of the polis was the origin of the rift between God and man.¹⁹

On Hegel's view, all other forms of modern fragmentation had issued from the original opposition of substantive and subjective universality. As the former was a home for the early Greeks, so the latter had been honed through philosophical friction produced by Socrates, Jesus, Machiavelli and the moderns. Hegel saw that the meaning of subjective freedom could not have been sharpened without cleaving ancient unity among a rapidly proliferating series of oppositions including those between subject and object, individual and society, freedom and nature, infinite and finite, God and man, etc. Descartes had only endorsed a distinction between thought and experience that was initially Parmenidean, yet the relation of subjectivity to its world became the fundamental problem of the modern period. It issued in the mainstream of Enlightenment thought; branching into atomism, mechanism, materialism, positivism and radical utilitarianism; surging to ideological excess; eroding the value system that traditionally had brought a sense of meaningful cohesion to European life; and carving deep divisions in what once was common ground.

Hegel's assessment of modern fragmentation was shared by contemporaries, such as Hölderlin, and shaped by Herder and Schiller in the preceding generation. All of them sought some basis for the restoration of harmony in human experience, and the recreation of a more integrated community. Schiller, in particular, had set out a powerful critique of Enlightenment ideals in his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Mankind*, hailed by the young Hegel as a "masterpiece". The *Letters* provided Hegel with an early insight into the spiritual beauty of ancient Greece. Sketched in nostalgic hues of harmony and cohesion, the latter is contrasted with the stifling, splintered society of eighteenth-century Europe, a disintegration that Schiller attributes to the rise of speculative thought and intensifications in the division of labour.

Eternally tied to a single fragment of the whole, man himself develops into nothing but a fragment. Everlastingly in his ear is the monotonous sound of the wheel which he operates. He never develops the harmony of his being, and instead of stamping the imprint of humanity upon nature he becomes no more than the imprint of his occupation and his specialised knowledge.²⁰

Beneath the burden of his specialization modern man had become an abstract shadow of his ancient predecessor. In Schiller's words specialization had produced a "more rigorous separation of ranks and occupations", and replaced the "organic" life of the polis with "an ingenious clockwork in which out of the piecing together of innumerable but lifeless parts, a mechanical kind of collective life ensued". In modern society individuals are but "fragments" of their own inherent humanity, so that "one might almost be tempted to assert, the various faculties appear as separate in practice as they are distinguished by the psychologist in theory".

The differentiation of intellectual disciplines, the fragmentation of the personality, and the spread of social divisions were parts of the same process. Schiller insisted fragmentation could not be overcome in any one of these areas without addressing the other two, and Herder agreed that "together with the classes, ranks and professions, the inner faculties have unfortunately become separated . . . no single fragment partakes of the whole any more".²¹

Yet it was impossible to deny the benefits that science and specialization had brought to society. Despite his deep admiration for the ancients, Schiller proposed to return neither to an outmoded world view nor to obsolete social practices. In their place, he argued, it was necessary to develop a new foundation for integration and harmony in human life.

There was no need to look to the past for the fragmentation of human powers would lead to their future reunification, a reunion that would spring from a transcendence of the traditional opposition of reason and sensuous experience. Though there could be no return to the unreflective innocence of ancient Greece, it was possible to attain new and higher holism, fired by impulse, informed by art and dedicated to beauty. In this "aesthetic state" humanity would regain an integration similar to that which it had lost in ancient Greece, and find redemption, as Schiller foresaw, from its sojourn of spiritual fragmentation.

I readily admit that, little as individuals might have benefited from this fragmentation of their person there was no other way in which the species as a whole could have developed . . . If the many capacities in man were to be developed there was no other way but to oppose them. The antagonism of the faculties and the functions is the great instrument of civilization.²²

Essentially, Schiller envisioned a triadic typology of human development. History began, as in ancient Athens, with an undifferentiated

society populated by well-rounded individuals who had yet to experience the fragmentation wrought by natural science and division of labour. It passed through a lengthy intermediate phase characterized by forms of fragmentation occurring reciprocally in the individual and the community, and culminated in their aesthetic reintegration through the cultivation of beauty and spontaneity. Thus Schiller, and after him Hölderlin and Hegel (and Marx), came to a view of history as a development from natural harmony, through fragmentation and conflict, toward a higher form of unity. In his *Hyperion Fragment* Hölderlin observed

There are two ideals of our existence: one is a condition of the greatest simplicity, where our needs accord with each other, with our powers and with everything we are related to, *just through the organisation of nature*, without any action on our part. The other is a condition of the highest cultivation, where this accord would come about between infinitely diversified and strengthened needs and powers, through the organisation which we are able to give to ourselves.

Hölderlin's poetic account already contained a hint of that reciprocal universality through which that development may be understood to occur.

The blessed unity, Being . . . is lost to us, and we had to lose it if we are to gain it again by striving and struggle. We tear ourselves loose from the peaceful *en kai pan* of the world, what was once, as we can believe, is now in conflict with itself, and each side alternates between mastery and servitude.²³

– HEGEL'S RESPONSE TO CULTURAL FRAGMENTATION –

The contrast between the organic life of the polis and the fragmentation of modern society became the predominant focus of Hegel's thought. He was moved to describe the polis as a "political work of art" in so far as no part could be detached from another, and the universal coincided perfectly with the particular.²⁴ Yet the aesthetic integration of the Greeks was shattered irreparably with the discovery of subjective freedom by Socrates and the Sophists. Could the simple beauty of that community be recovered on the basis of aesthetic principles?

On Hegel's view, art acquires not only an epistemological but an ontological significance, in so far as it is a mode for the expression

and appreciation of the absolute. Yet it remains an inadequate expression of the absolute in so far as its expression of universality is sensuously connected to a particular medium.²⁵ Though beauty results from their combination, the union is limited to this particular piece. Hence, works of art are multiplied *ad infinitum* without either diminishing the value of particular works or producing measurable improvement.²⁶ Each piece of art stands alone as a distinctive expression of the universal in the particular.

In a similar way, the implicit universality of the subject was sunk within, and gracefully harmonized with, the particularity of each of the Greek city-states. The life of the Greek citizen was absorbed in these particular laws, these temples, these ceremonies, rituals and traditions celebrating a pantheon whose particularism was marked by its own idiosyncratic polytheism. He was perfectly at home in his state because he had not yet asserted his own self-consciousness as a challenge to its particularity. He had not yet framed its limitations against the freedom of his own subjective universality.

Yet despite the early appeal of Schiller's aesthetic analysis, Hegel was not convinced that beauty alone could provide a basis for surmounting the radical and rapidly proliferating divisions of modern society. While Schiller emphasized the importance of individual spontaneity, he seemed to ignore the rationalism that had underpinned subjective freedom since its introduction by Socrates, that same inherent rationalism that Kant had finally carried to its logical crescendo. And if individual spontaneity was insufficiently rational, then beauty was insufficiently resilient to overcome the hydra of modern fragmentation. Eventually, Hegel distinguished himself from Schiller by locating the aesthetic community at the Aegean origins of history instead of at its end. In his lectures on *The Philosophy of History* he remarked that an aesthetic approach is inadequate in so far as it lacks the self-containment of self-consciousness.

Greek morality, though extremely beautiful . . . is not the highest point of view for Spiritual self-consciousness. It wants the form of Infinity, the reflection of thought within itself, the emancipation from the Natural element . . . and from that immediacy, which attaches to their ethics. Self-Comprehension on the part of Thought is wanting – illimitable Self-Consciousness – demanding, that what is regarded by me as Right and Morality should have its confirmation in myself – from the testimony of my own Spirit; that the beautiful (the Idea as manifested in sensuous contemplation or conception) may also become the True – an inner, super-sensuous world. The standpoint occupied by the Aesthetic Spiritual Unity

which we have just described, could not long be the resting-place of Spirit; and the element in which further advance and corruption originated was that of Subjectivity – inward morality, individual reflection and an inner life generally. The principle of subjective morality which was inevitably introduced became the germ of corruption . . .²⁷

But if art was not the answer to modern fragmentation then perhaps it was religion. During his years at Tübingen, from 1788 to 1793, Hegel's meditation upon the origins of social fragmentation had led him to focus upon the role of religion in a cohesive community life. He was particularly interested in the contrast between the folk religion of Greece and contemporary Christianity, and considered the sort of religious reforms that would be necessary to restore a meaningful wholeness to German culture. In a series of theological essays he contrasted the public religions of antiquity with the inwardness of Christianity; he envisioned Jesus as a Kantian moral reformer; sought the positivistic elements of Christian doctrine in the Judaic context of his teachings; and experimented with a theological emotivism, wherein Christian love would provide an enduring unification of opposites. Yet he was led through these studies to consider that whereas the teachings of the church had contributed to modern fragmentation, even a reformed Christianity would be insufficient to resolve the problem. For whereas the gods had once been at home in the polis, we have seen it is the fate of Christianity that church and state, worship worldly action, can never be one.²⁸

Religion, like art, is considered by Hegel as a representation of the absolute. Yet while it improves upon art through its explicit conceptualization and the overt universality of its form, its figurative, or pictorial, presentation (*Vorstellung*) immerses that universality, once again, in the particular. A religion is tied to these sacred events, this holy site, these relics, revelations, maxims and commands. These are among those positivistic elements that Hegel criticized in his early essays on Christianity and Judaism; yet they are also part of the symbolic lexicon that Hegel eventually came to accept as inevitable in any religion.

The difference between Hegel's early theological essays and his mature treatment of religion is his recognition that whereas religion, like art, could represent the absolute in an accessible manner, it could not ultimately be regarded as a solution for cultural fragmentation. Because its universality remains bound to the particular, it does not address all of the needs of the modern self. As is the case with art,

religion provides greater fulfilment for some individuals than it does for others but, taken by itself, it is an inadequate antidote to modern fragmentation for it lacks the critical rationalism that has carried subjective freedom through its twenty-five hundred year development, the rationalism without which the self can scarcely defend its claim to universality.²⁹

If the development of subjective freedom lies at the heart of modern cultural fragmentation, then the fragmentation of modern society can be addressed only through a medium that is fully capable of accommodating subjective freedom; and if it is to accommodate subjective freedom then it must be compatible with the universality and rationality that have characterized subjective freedom since the days of Socrates. Social fragmentation began with philosophy, and it is only philosophy that can resolve it. In Hegel's words, "it is thinking which both produces the wound and heals it".³⁰ The cure, as eventually conceived by Hegel, would require a philosophy that developed along with the development of subjective freedom, thereby remaining abreast of social fragmentation. It would involve a philosophy understood metaphilosophically as a history of philosophy, a philosophy understood as the philosophy of its own history or as the self-consciousness of human self-consciousness.

These conclusions followed from Hegel's meditations upon the limitations of irrationalist approaches to self-reflection, such as those of revelation and aesthetic inspiration, but they also followed from his study, in 1799, of Steuart's *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Economy*. In that work, Steuart proposed to trace "the regular progress of mankind from perfect simplicity to complicated refinement".³¹ Historical progress was "regular" for Steuart, in the sense that it was rationally discernible.

From Steuart and Schiller alike, Hegel learned that there could be no return to social systems of the past. But from Steuart, even more than Schiller, Hegel acquired the notion of historical development. He came to see modern society not so much as a fading echo of its ancient predecessors but rather as incorporating values and principles, and as realizing powers and propensities that were alien to the ancient world. Studying Steuart he began to regard his own pensive fixation on worlds of the past, whether holy or heroic, as a prelude to a history of human experience that would include a comprehensive grasp of those potentia that were realized in the modern world. It was within the latter, not the former, context that the rationality of the modern world could be evaluated, and it was only

on the strength of such an evaluation that modern man might recognize the forms of community presently available, and find himself at home within them. It was an approach that would lead Hegel to a conception of political universality capable of incorporating subjective freedom; of locating the moral autonomy of Kant within a cohesive political community; and of thereby addressing the problems of modern fragmentation. But this would require more than political philosophy in the modern sense of the term, for the modern philosophical vocabulary was both the product and purveyor of modern fragmentation. Instead it would require a holistic approach which recalled an ancient integration of community and cosmos without relinquishing subjective freedom.

— KNOW THYSELF: SUBSTANCE,
— SUBJECTIVITY AND SELF-CONTAINMENT —

Hegel arrived at a philosophical vision that could accommodate subjective freedom because it was based on a paradigm derived from his analysis of the structure of self-consciousness, a vision that would integrate consciousness, community and cosmos through its application to all evolutionary processes, whether natural or historical. Through its determination in the empirical world, subjectivity develops toward a recognition of its universality within particularity, and thereby arrives at a knowledge of its own self-containment. In its particularity it is the ordinary individual subject who experiences himself to be influenced and determined by the world about him. Yet it is, at the same time, the universe as a whole, the universe conceived as developing itself continuously through increasingly higher dialectical levels as a consequence of its self-containment.

In so far as it is conceived as a self-contained totality, the universe is described by Hegel as the Absolute Idea. It is described as *Geist* in so far as it may also be considered as determining itself, and as thereby developing itself through progressively higher dialectical levels, toward a recognition of itself as the structure of its own self-containment and the process of its own self-development. Whereas the Idea is the self-containment of the universe as a whole, *Geist* is the process of dialectical development which occurs as a consequence of that self-containment, and which proceeds toward a consciousness of the same. *Geist* is thus the historical process by which the universe develops through the actualization of its potential toward a self-conscious comprehension of itself.³²

During the recent rehabilitation of Hegel's philosophy it has become fashionable to translate Hegel's *Geist* as "spirit", though not without the obligatory notice that the German term also means "mind", the translation preferred by an earlier generation of commentators. The use of "spirit" has the advantage of liberating Hegel from the narrow and dogmatic idealism with which those commentaries sometimes saddled him, but it also leads to new misinterpretations. Taylor, for example, cannot get past his conception of individuals as "vehicles" of spirit to the deeper recognition that the particular subject contains the universal, such that the two are identical. For Taylor, particular subjects are merely particular and spirit is the universal that manifests itself in the form of their thoughts and actions. Consistent with the modern tradition, but contrary to Hegel's intent, Taylor thus presents both the individual and the absolute as one-sided abstractions in which universality and particularity never truly meet. Instead of this fragmented conception of universality and particularity, Hegel contends that history leads

to a comprehension of mind as the self-knowing actual Idea, to the Concept of living mind which, in a necessary manner immanently differentiates itself and returns out of its differences into unity with itself. But in doing so, it has not only overcome the abstractions prevalent in those finite interpretations of mind, the merely individual, merely particular, and merely universal, reducing them to moments of the Concept which is their truth; but also, instead of externally describing a material already to hand, it has vindicated as the only scientific method the rigorous form of the necessary self-development of the content.³³

The choice of the term "mind" has the advantage of focusing attention upon Hegel's analysis of self-conscious subjectivity at the very foundation of his system, while "spirit" is useful in focusing upon its substantive significance. But contemporary interpretations of Hegel generally have failed to grasp Hegel's identification of the individual self-consciousness with the universal substance, and have consequently misunderstood Hegel's contention that consciousness of the particular self implies a consciousness of the totality. For example in his introduction to the third section of his *Encyclopedia*, dealing with the philosophy of mind, Hegel remarks that

The significance of that "absolute" commandment, *Know thyself* – whether we look at it in itself or under the historical circumstances of its first utterance – is not to promote mere self-knowledge in respect of the

particular capacities, character, propensities, and foibles of the single self. The knowledge it commands means that of man's genuine reality – of what is essentially and ultimately true and real – of mind as the true and essential being . . . Even finite or subjective mind, not only absolute mind, must be grasped as an actualisation of the Idea. The treatment of mind is only truly philosophical when it cognizes the Concept of mind in its living development and actualisation, which simply means, when it comprehends mind as a type of the absolute Idea.³⁴

But why should history develop toward self-consciousness, and why should this consciousness of self imply a knowledge of the totality? From the standpoint of SC, it does so as a necessary consequence of the self-containment of the universe. In accord with the model of self-containment presented in Chapter 2, the universe continuously limits or determines itself as a lower level in relation to its higher level indeterminacy. Or as Hegel explains, the cosmos, which he characterizes (in light of the above considerations) as concept, is driven by the contradiction inherent in this higher level indeterminacy to actualize its potential³⁵ through a sequence of lower level determinations of itself.

The Concept does not require any external stimulus for its actualisation; it embraces the contradiction of simplicity and difference, and therefore its own restless nature impels it to actualise itself, to unfold into actuality the difference which, in the Concept itself, is present only in an ideal manner, that is to say, in the contradictory form of differencelessness, and by this removal of its simplicity as of a defect, a one-sidedness, to make itself actually that whole, of which to begin with it contained only the possibility.³⁶

As a consequence of its self-containment, the universe continuously transcends the limitations of each consecutive level as it reproduces itself at progressively higher levels; and as it reproduces itself at higher levels it produces increasingly sophisticated determinations of itself. Hegel explains that at each consecutive state, mind's "solution of its problem creates new problems for it to solve, so that it multiplies the materials on which it operates . . . Each of the creations in which it found temporary satisfaction presents itself in turn as a new material, challenging the spirit to develop it further still."³⁷

Each time that it rises to a new and higher level it is determined or differentiated at that level which was previously highest, but which is

now a lower level. Through the sequence of these expressions at consecutively higher levels it actualizes its potentials, which would be mutually exclusive and contradictory if they were actualized simultaneously and at the same level.³⁸

Self-consciousness is achieved each time that subjectivity rises to a new and higher level. Rising to this new and higher level, subjectivity overcomes its lower level limitations, upon which it is thereby enabled to reflect in so far as its higher level vantage point allows it to compare its lower level determination with that which it excludes. Rising to a new and higher level, I become aware of my lower level limitations in so far as I transcend them and am thereby enabled to compare them with that which they are not.³⁹

From the standpoint of OM the structure of subjectivity is the structure of the universe, and the development of the universe is the development of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the development of subjectivity, and both subjectivity and substance are identified with the universe as a whole. Hegel explains that self-consciousness might appear to be superfluous to physical phenomena

But it belongs to the nature of mind to cognize its Concept. Consequently, the summons to the Greeks of the Delphic Apollo, *Know thyself*, does not have the meaning of a law externally imposed on the human mind by an alien power; on the contrary the god who impels to self-knowledge is none other than the absolute law of mind itself. Mind is, therefore, in its every act only apprehending itself, and the aim of all genuine science is just this, that mind shall recognise itself in everything in heaven and on earth.⁴⁰

– RECIPROCITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –

Traditionally the cosmos has been regarded as a substantive universality within which particular communities are contained; and communities have been regarded, in turn, as universals within which particular individuals are contained. The Milesian innovation involved a conception of the physical universe on the model of the political community, opening the door for the discovery of natural laws and the development of modern science. Thus, on the one hand, Greek communities were contained within the universe, while, on the other hand, the universe was regarded as structured like a community. The Milesian projection of the structure of the part upon the whole implied that the structure of the whole could be conceived as contained within the part. This implication rendered their discovery of subjective universality all the more significant.

Steeped in the traditions of the city-state, Milesian life was grounded on an unreflective political identity compatible with the parochialism of any given city. The development of modern society has meant the sacrifice of this seamless continuity in the lives of the individual and the community. This is because modern man has followed Socrates in the achievement of a subjective universality in relation to which the state appears as limited and particularized.

In accord with RU, as following from Hegel's doctrine of the concept (p. 47–8) and the preceding interpretation of self-containing classes (p. 49, 50), the modern individual may be conceived on the one hand as a particular in relation to the political universality of the state. As such he is a member of a class of citizens. Yet on the other hand, the individual may be conceived as a universal in relation to which the state is particularized. Through the capacity of his universal self-consciousness, the modern individual reflects upon the limitations of his state and thereby recognizes it as a particular social order, subject to various limitations and available for rational improvement. This may occur as he compares the policies of his state with universal principles of moral conduct, or when he otherwise notices opportunities for the rational development of the political system. The subsequent discussion will show that this development is rational in so far as the subject effects political modifications following from his evaluation of the particular arrangements of his society in terms of those rational principles that are the hallmark of his subjective universality.

The collectivity is a universal in so far as it is regarded as a substance that is particularized in the consciousness of its individual members and given expression in their thoughts and actions. The individual citizen is regarded as a particular in so far as he is determined or conditioned by the state. But the individual rises above his particularity, and attains subjective universality, through his self-conscious comprehension of the limitations of the collectivity. He achieves subjective universality in so far as he recognizes the limitations of his social system and acts to alter or determine it.

Because the modern individual recognizes the state as limited and particular, he is incapable of identifying himself completely with the universality of any determinate social order, as did the ancient Greeks. Since we now perceive the limitations of any given social order, we are capable of identifying with it only in so far as it is accessible to improvement in relation to rational criteria. We are capable of fully identifying with the state only in so far as it allows

for subjective universality, or only in so far as the individual and the collectivity are related as reciprocal universals within an historical process that results in the development of each in relation to modifications produced by the other at consecutive dialectical levels.

The RU relationship between the individual and the community may be presented heuristically as a four-step cycle. Let the cycle begin as it began in the teachings of Socrates, with the principle of subjective freedom. In this first stage, the self-conscious individual reflects upon his experience and recognizes (some of) the limitations of his society. It is appropriate that this component of the relationship should have been introduced, historically, by Socrates, for it involves a fundamentally philosophical feature. As he reflects upon the limitations of his society, any citizen is performing a function equivalent to that of the philosopher as described in the first chapter. He is grasping the limitations of the current system in such a way as to provide for its subsequent transformation.

In the second stage, he undertakes this transformation, if only on a limited scale, when he acts in some way to alter his social system. Such acts include anything that contributes to the transcendence of collective limitations, whether voting, rebellion or entrepreneurship.

During these first two stages, the individual functions as a universal in so far as he perceives the limitations of his social system and attempts to alter it in such a way as to transcend those limitations. In the first stage he rises to universality in so far as he reflects upon the limitations of the collectivity; in the second stage he expresses that universality in so far as he acts to modify and determine that social system. In Hegel's terminology, the individual's universality in the first stage is concrete in so far as it transcends the particularity upon which it reflects. In the second stage this concrete universality of the individual becomes the abstract universality that issues in the further determination of the social system.

In the third and fourth stages, the same sequence occurs reciprocally on the part of the community. In the third stage, particular social and political events, resulting from the acts of individuals in the second stage, are organized into new forms of collective universality. Such universals may take the form of new (or modified) policies, laws or conventions. In the fourth stage, newly constituted universals of this sort act upon the individual, determining his outlook and experience. The individual is particularized in so far as he is limited and determined in relation to the collective universality. The concrete universality that the community achieves in the third stage becomes

the abstract universality that determines individuals in the fourth stage. In response to this determination the individual rises to a new and higher level of universality, from which he perceives further limitations of the social system, thereby renewing the cycle, which now may be conceived more adequately as a spiral rising continuously to new and higher levels.

Through their reciprocal universality, the individual and the collectivity participate in one another's development. In response to his determination by his community, the individual's consciousness rises dialectically to a new and higher level from which he is able to perceive the limitations of that community. Along with other individuals, he subsequently acts to modify those systems, thereby producing their dialectical transformation. As the collectivity develops it produces new determinations in its individual members, whose subsequent development places new demands on the collectivity. Through their reciprocal universality, the individual and the collectivity thus act to determine and to develop one another.

Yet while these four stages are the basis of any relationship of reciprocal universality, the model requires further articulation before it can be applied to anything as complex as social and political interaction. This is in part because relations of reciprocal universality occur not only between individuals and the collectivity but also between individuals and groups within the collectivity.

For example, any exchange relations can be modelled in terms of reciprocal universality. Two individuals may be understood to constitute an RU relationship in so far as each provides something that the other lacks. When I experience a need or desire, I encounter my own limitations. I am limited, and in that sense determined, in so far as I lack the object of my desire. Through this sense of limitation I experience my particularity, and I am the particular person that I am as a consequence of my specific limitations.

In so far as another individual is able to supply me with something I lack, he helps me to transcend some aspect of my particularity, and in so far as he possesses something that I lack, he represents a condition of universality in relation to which my particularity applies. If I, in turn, possess something that he lacks, then this relationship applies reciprocally. Each of us is particularized in relation to the other in so far as he lacks something that the other possesses, and in so far as we engage in an exchange we assist one another in transcending that aspect of our particularity.

In this way, any exchange relationship can be understood in terms

of RU. Individuals or groups participating in such relationships will stimulate one another's development to dialectical levels that are new and that are also higher in the sense of being more inclusive. As they rise to new and higher levels, each encounters further limitations in himself, and each is capable of supplying others with further contributions.

Social groups are constituted by individuals who have similar limitations, and who are similarly determined in their relations with the collectivity and with its constituent members. Such groups may be organized around determinations that are ethnic, economic, political, religious, geographical, historical, sexual, avocational, etc. Groups of this sort may enter into RU relations with individuals, with other groups and with the collectivity. They operate as particulars in so far as they are limited and in so far as they are acted upon and determined (whether by individuals, by other groups or by the collectivity) along the lines of those limitations. They operate as universals in so far as they determine individuals, other groups or the collectivity. RU relations between individuals or sub-groups are economic or social in their nature, while RU relations between a whole and its constituent groups or individual members are understood as political.

In so far as it is conceived as this web of mutually conditioning relationships, a society is understood organically, and in so far as its organs are conceived as providing for one another's needs, any organism may be conceived as an RU relationship. Once again, such relations may be considered as occurring among the parts or as occurring between the whole and each of its parts. For example, the heart provides blood flow for the lungs, and the lungs provide oxygen content for the blood. In accord with the preceding discussion of exchange relationships, each may be regarded as a universal in so far as it determines, or provides, for the needs of the other. Yet it is also possible to regard each organ as functioning in an RU relationship with the organism as a whole. Thus, the lungs provide oxygen for the body while the latter provides for the needs of the lungs. From the standpoint of OM, the usefulness of the organic analogy is a function of the fact that both societies and living beings can be modelled, like the universe itself, in terms of RU.

— RECIPROCITY AND SELF-CONTAINMENT — — IN HEGEL'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY —

These considerations will now be applied to an interpretation of Hegel's political philosophy. I will argue that Hegel's theory of the

state may be understood in terms of RU relations occurring within a political community and providing continuously for its historical transformation. The significance that Hegel attached to subjective universality is indicated by the fact that his consideration of politics and history begins with the concept of the free will: "The basis of right is, in general, mind; its precise place and point of origin is the will. The will is free, so that freedom is both the substance of right and its goal, while the system of right is the realm of freedom made actual . . ." ⁴¹

For Hegel, freedom is the foundation of human society and the motive of human history, because it is the essence of subjective self-determination. Hence, the exposition of his political philosophy begins with a straightforward invitation to the reader to consider the nature of freedom by examining the structure of "his own self-consciousness. In the first place, anyone can discover in himself ability to abstract from everything whatever, and in the same way to determine himself, to posit any content in himself by way of his own effort; and similarly the other specific characteristics of the will are exemplified for him in his own consciousness." ⁴²

Hegel associates the freedom of the will with that which OM describes as the higher level indeterminacy, and universality, of the subject. In his words, the "will contains the element of pure indeterminacy or that pure reflection of the ego into itself which involves the dissipation of every restriction and every content either immediately presented by nature, by needs, desires and impulses, or given and determined by any means whatever. This is the unrestricted infinity of absolute abstraction or universality, the pure thought of oneself." ⁴³

Were this higher level universality to be taken in abstraction from its particular expression, Hegel remarks that it would be comparable to the urge toward "absolute freedom" which culminated in "the fury of destruction" and relentless self-negation of the French revolution. ⁴⁴ But "at the same time, the self is also the transition from undifferentiated indeterminacy to the differentiation, determination, and positing of a determinacy as a content and object". ⁴⁵ The self, in other words, acquires content through its determination of itself in particular acts of volition. Hegel explains that through its "finitude or particularisation" the subject "steps in principle into determinate existence", and he states that he will wish to interpret this self-determination of subjectivity as applying to the production of both natural and cultural phenomena. But neither determinacy nor indeterminacy can be taken in abstraction, for the "will is the unity

of both these moments".⁴⁶ Again Hegel appeals to self-conscious introspection in order to establish that the unity of universality and particularity must be conceived in terms of their dynamic reciprocity, wherein the universal determines itself as a particular which nonetheless retains its equality with the universal.

Every self-consciousness knows itself (i) as universal, as the potentiality of abstracting from everything determinate, and (ii) as particular, with a determinate object, content, and aim. Still, both these moments are only abstractions; what is concrete and true (and everything true is concrete) is the universality which has the particular as its opposite, but the particular which by its reflection into itself has been equalised with the universal.⁴⁷

The reciprocity of universal and particular is the basis for Hegel's dialectical method, through which he understands mind as determining and developing itself. He writes that the "concept's moving principle, which alike engenders and dissolves the particularizations of the universal, I call 'dialectic'".⁴⁸ And the reciprocity of universality and particularity leads dialectically to Hegel's concept of a person: "Personality implies that as *this* person: (i) I am completely determined on every side (in my inner caprice, impulse, and desire, as well as by immediate external facts) and so finite, yet (ii) nonetheless I am simply and solely self-relation, and therefore in finitude I know myself as something infinite, universal, and free."⁴⁹

Hegel derives the concept of right from the concept of personality, since "[p]ersonality essentially involves the capacity for rights . . ."⁵⁰ The concept of right incorporates that of self-determining universality, which devolves to it dialectically from the concepts of personality and free will. Hegel traces the concept to the Roman empire, where the participatory parochialism of the polis was replaced by a universal citizenship based upon a legal conception of abstract individuality. But he also follows Kant in closely connecting the concept of right to the autonomy and universality of the subject.⁵¹ And, as in the Kantian kingdom of ends, subjective universality implies a right of recognition. "Hence," says Hegel, "the imperative of right is: 'Be a person and respect others as persons.'"⁵²

But the concept of right also involves the determination of the universal, an ontological requirement that Hegel applies toward a justification of personality's fundamental right to property. The individual finds his personality expressed and objectified in the form of his property, such that he is enabled to reflect upon himself and begin

his development toward self-consciousness.⁵³ For Hegel, property and the labour through which it is produced are not primarily means for material satisfaction but prerequisites for self-realization and ethical development. The individual realizes and eventually reflects upon himself through the expression of his will, which occurs, in part, through his acquisition of property. Since property is fundamental for the expression of subjective freedom and the formation of the individual personality, it is a necessary feature of modern society. The connection between subjective freedom and private property was implicit in Plato's restriction of both and, conversely, Hegel's interest in a dialectical accommodation of subjectivity leads to his strident condemnation of Platonic communism on the grounds that it "violates the right of personality by forbidding the holding of private property".⁵⁴

A person's right to possess property implies his right to alienate or exchange it. This leads Hegel to the notion of contract and to the violation of contract. Thus, for Hegel, the concept of right implies the negation of right, or wrong. The concept of wrong is developed through a discussion of crime and punishment, in which the latter is presented as serving the development of the criminal's self-consciousness.

Through his discussion of crime and punishment, Hegel is led to consider the individual's efforts to rectify or eliminate wrongdoing, which he understands as the impetus for morality. Like Kant, Hegel founds morality upon the subject's self-conscious recognition of his own universality. "The standpoint of morality is the standpoint of the will which is infinite not merely in itself but for itself . . . this reflection of the will into itself and its explicit awareness of its identity makes the person into the subject."⁵⁵

As it first appeared historically, in fifth-century Athens, subjective universality was opposed to the substantial universality of the state, and, for Hegel, this element of self-assertion remains fundamental to the moral outlook. Morality involves the individual's conviction that the world should conform to universal principles; or, in Hegel's words, "the moral point of view is that of relation, of ought-to-be, or demand".⁵⁶ This position is elaborated in Hegel's philosophy of history:

What makes men morally *discontented* (and they may even take a certain pride in this discontent) is that they find the present unsuited to their ideas, principles and opinions concerning ends of a more universal content, which they consider to be right and good (among which we

must nowadays include ideals of political constitutions in particular), or to their predilection for constructing their own ideals on which to lavish their enthusiasm. They contrast existence as it is with their own view of how things by rights *ought* to be. In this case, it is not particular interests or passions which demand satisfaction, but reason, justice, and freedom; and equipped with this title, such demands give themselves an air of authority and can easily take the form not just of discontent with the condition and events of the world but of actual rebellion against them.⁵⁷

It is the nature of subjective universality to make such demands on the established order. In terms of SC, subjectivity is the higher level universality in relation to which all existing arrangements inevitably are particularized at the lower level. In so far as they are objects of consciousness, existing customs, laws and institutions are perceived as determinate, and thus limited, such that the subject recognizes opportunities for their transformation beyond those limitations. As considered in the second chapter, the subject's observation of these lower level limitations entails his ability to judge their propriety.

This subjectivity, *qua* abstract self-determination and pure certainty of oneself alone, as readily evaporates into itself the whole determinate character of right, duty and existence, as it remains both the power to judge, to determine from within itself alone, what is good in respect of any content, and also the power to which the good, at first only an ideal and an ought-to-be, owes its actuality.⁵⁸

The rise of this critical self-consciousness is specifically associated with Socrates, but Hegel notes that is a philosophical feature of any age in which the inherent limitations and contradictions of the established order have come to be apparent. He adds that subjective universality is more than an appreciation of existing limitations, for it is also a determination of ethical content, which may result reciprocally in the transformation of the established order.

The self-consciousness which has attained this absolute reflection into itself knows itself in this reflection to be the kind of consciousness which is and should be beyond the reach of every existent and given specific determination. As one of the commoner features of history (e.g. Socrates, the Stoics, and others), the tendency to look deeper into oneself and to know and determine from within oneself what is right and good appears in ages when what is recognised as right and good in contemporary manners cannot satisfy the will of better men. When the existing world of freedom has become faithless to the will of better men,

that will fails to find itself in the duties there recognised and must try to find in the ideal world of the inner life alone the harmony which actuality has lost. Once self-consciousness has grasped and secured its formal right in this way, everything depends on the character of the content which it gives to itself.⁵⁹

In an addition to this passage, Hegel emphasizes that subjective universality not only involves a criticism of existing arrangements, but also entails the positive determination of ethical content. In rising to a new and higher level of universality, subjectivity not only recognizes the limitations of the existing order, but reciprocally is enabled to modify those social arrangements. On the one hand, subjectivity is the higher level indeterminacy in which social and political conventions are “vaporized”.

On the other hand, just as subjectivity evaporates every content into itself, so it may develop it out of itself once more. Everything which arises in the ethical sphere is produced by this activity of mind . . . While, therefore, it is right enough to evaporate right and duty into subjectivity, it is wrong if this abstract groundwork is not then condensed out again.⁶⁰

His discussion of the determination of moral content from out of the higher level indeterminacy of subjective universality leads Hegel to a discussion of the reciprocity of substantive and subjective forms of universality. Like contemporary theorists, Hegel refers to the substantive universality of a normative social system as the “good” and contrasts this with a more deontological subjective conscience. He insists that an attempt to abstract these two sides from one another will lead to the recognition that they are ultimately determinations of the same higher level universality, which he describes as ethical life.

For the good as the substantial universal of freedom, but as something still abstract, there are therefore required determinate characteristics of some sort and the principle for determining them, though a principle identical with the good itself. For conscience similarly, as the purely abstract principle of determination, it is required that its decisions shall be universal and objective. If good and conscience are each kept abstract and thereby elevated to independent totalities, then both become the indeterminate which ought to be determined. But the integration of these two relative totalities into an absolute identity has already been implicitly achieved in that this very subjectivity of pure self-certainty, aware in its vacuity of its gradual evaporation, is identical with the abstract universality

of the good. The identity of the good with the subjective will, an identity which therefore is concrete and the truth of them both, is Ethical Life.⁶¹

Hegel writes that it is the nature of substantive and subjective forms of universality each “to have its opposite implicit within it”.⁶² Hence, “when both build themselves into independent totalities, they are annulled and thereby reduced to moments . . . of the concept which becomes manifest as their unity and, having acquired reality precisely through this positing of its moments, is now present as Idea.”⁶³ Through their reciprocity substantive and subjective forms of universality are integrated as moments within a unifying process of historical development. They express the self-containment of the Idea, as each is repeatedly determined by the other throughout the consecutive stages or moments of this process.

This self-containment is ultimately the source of that reciprocal universality which provides for the ethical development of both the individual and the collectivity. In Chapter 2, self-containment was closely associated with contradiction, which has served as the motive for dialectical development. Here in the ethical realm, a similar connection may be established between contradiction and self-containment; and here their connection is especially useful in elucidating the role of dialectical development in the resolution of social fragmentation. In the *Encyclopedia* Hegel asserts that “the good is the universal of will – a universal determined in itself – and thus including in it particularity.”⁶⁴ Yet when taken in abstraction from an inherent principle of self-determination

there awakes here the deepest contradiction. In consequence of the *sorts* of goods and *many kinds of duties*, the variety of which is a dialectic of one against another and brings them into *collision*. At the same time because good is one, they *ought* to stand in harmony; and yet each of them, though it is a particular duty, is a good and as duty absolute. It falls upon the agent to be the dialectic which, superseding this absolute claim of each, concludes such a combination of them as excludes the rest.⁶⁵ [emphasis added]

The claims of various goods and duties collide with one another, and through their collision constitute a dialectic which is the very core of moral subjectivity. Moral subjectivity, in other words, is the dialectical process of weighing, apportioning and choosing between these conflicting moral claims. “The only relation the self-contradictory principles have to one another,” Hegel says, “is in the abstract

certainty of the self.”⁶⁶ Morality is Hegel’s term for the struggle to secure the proper balance, or harmony, which ought to, but which in fact does not, hold between these competing claims. Morality is the “all-round contradiction, expressed by this repeated *ought*, with its absoluteness, which yet at the same time is *not*.”⁶⁷ Lukács explains,

each moral duty is only a moment in the overall dialectical totality of society, or “life”. But the entire complex is itself contradictory; contradictions between its particular determinations lie at its very foundations. The situation is not that the particular moral duties are all neatly compartmentalised and govern a neatly segregated area, or that they are arranged in a hierarchy, but that conflict, struggle and contradiction dominate the entire scene. Since every moment, every duty lays claim to absolute validity it must necessarily come into conflict with other moments that make the same claim. And only the living totality of all these determinations can annul this conflict. But the essence of this totality is precisely that it is a totality of such conflicting determinations.⁶⁸

Lukács describes the dilemmas that commonly result from assertions of universal validity on behalf of particular moral principles. He refers to a “living totality” of moral claims which annuls their inherent contradictions precisely because “it is the totality of such conflicting determinations”. It is possible to consider this totality of moral claims as a class that includes itself as a member by supposing, for example, that all moral principles were recorded in a code M. Presumably, such a code would then constitute a new moral principle M, since we would be enjoined not only to uphold each of its separate maxims, but also to uphold the code as a whole. But since M is a new moral principle it must also be a member of class M so that M is both the class of all moral principles and a member of that class. Of course, such a code could never be published in its entirety since its maxims presumably could be endlessly enumerated. But this is precisely the point. In accord with OM, the progression of moral principles would continue without end because the class of all moral principles contains itself as a member and therefore must be conceived as continually determining itself in the form of particular moral principles, whose application is exclusive of other moral principles.

On this view, there is inevitably a tension or conflict among moral principles so that all such moral principles could not be applied, or perhaps even recognized, simultaneously, but would at best allow a sequential application. At any given time, one such principle could be

applied only if another principle was not at that time in force. The inherent conflict of these claims, as expressed through their sequential application, might then be taken as constituting the dialectical development of moral subjectivity. The subject undergoes a moral evolution as he struggles with inevitable moral dilemmas, reflects upon the inadequacies of each of his principles and conducts their dialectical modification.

More to the point, suppose that the class of all moral principles were conceived (in accord with Brouwer's definition of a class (pp. 47, 49)) as a rule for determining moral principles. This is the Kantian approach, which relies upon a second order, meta-principle, such as the categorical imperative, for the determination of first-order moral principles. Now if the class of all moral principles is itself such a moral principle, then it is clearly a class that contains itself as a member. Hence, Hegel's conclusions regarding the contradictory nature of morality would follow from this feature of self-membership, and any attempt to determine an absolute, or otherwise fundamental, moral principle would be likely to result in a dialectical progression of such principles. This is because any moral determination (judgement or act) will seem, upon reflection, to be limited and inadequate in relation to other moral principles that it excludes or with which it conflicts. Finally, this self-contradictory totality of moral principles may be conceived as the subjective will, which is responsible for determining itself in the form of such judgements and acts.

— HISTORY AND RECIPROCITY IN HEGEL'S — CONCEPTION OF ETHICAL LIFE

Hegel explains that competing moral claims are transcended in an ongoing social order that he describes as *Sittlichkeit*. The term derives from *Sitten*, or ethics, and is commonly translated as ethical order or ethical life. It is distinguished by Hegel from *Moralität* which connotes a Kantian moral individualism. But the significance of the term in Hegelian philosophy extends far beyond ordinary ethical considerations. It effectively embraces all forms of social, economic and political interaction including the family, the business world, the legal system, the government and ultimately world history. The latter is especially important, for *Sittlichkeit* is fundamentally evolutionary, and may be understood as developing through RU relations.

In PR, Hegel's transition from *Moralität* to *Sittlichkeit* includes his remark that "Each of the two principles hitherto discussed, namely

good in the abstract and conscience, is defective in lacking its opposite.”⁶⁹ Whereas substantive and subjective forms of universality have been regarded, for at least twenty-five hundred years, as opposed and as mutually exclusive, Hegel approaches them as reciprocal universals which consecutively determine one another. Thus Hegel’s transition from morality to ethical life involves a *Gestalt* shift in which we no longer focus on these opposites, as representing prospectively independent values, but focus instead on the evolutionary process that results from their interaction. This evolutionary process may be conceived as a meta-universal which incorporates the reciprocal interaction of substantive and subjective forms of universality. In other words, it incorporates the reciprocal interaction between the subject and any determinate set of social rules and conventions; or it incorporates the reciprocal interaction between the individual and the laws, conventions and norms of a society as they exist at any particular time. This interaction results in the alteration of both the individual and the society, and through their reciprocal determination at consecutive dialectical levels, individual and society are bound together in a single, cohesive, historical process. The individual is determined by his community, and subsequently acts in such a way as to change his society, which responds to those changes in such a way as to change the individual, and so on throughout a continuous process of development. In this way the ethical life of the community is developed and actualized according to the same pattern that previously has been associated with the development of subjectivity. In Hegel’s words “[t]he objective ethical order, which comes on the scene in place of the good in the abstract, is substance made concrete by subjectivity as infinite form”.⁷⁰

Commentators from Marx to Taylor have interpreted Hegel’s conceptions of *Sittlichkeit* and the state in terms of the determinate institutions, laws and conventions existing in a society at any particular time. However, the following discussion will suggest that such interpretations have overlooked important features of Hegel’s political philosophy and may have burdened it with obscurities and inconsistencies of their own devising. It will deny that Hegel’s conceptions of *Sittlichkeit*, the state and the universal will may be identified with the positive arrangements existing in a society at any particular time, and will suggest instead that Hegel conceived of *Sittlichkeit* and the state in terms of the historical process that results from the RU of the individual and the determinate institutions, laws, and conventions of a society at any particular stage of that development. In Hegel’s

words, "[t]he unity of the subjective with the objective and absolute good is ethical life, and in it we find the reconciliation which accords with the concept".⁷¹

This is to say that the determinate institutions, laws, conventions and norms of a society at any particular time are not the universal that Hegel has in mind when he refers either to *Sittlichkeit* or to the state. Rather such determinate laws, etc. constitute a single component of an RU relationship that also includes individuals and socio-economic subgroups as other components. With this shift in focus from the political players (individual, associative and institutional) to the process of their interaction, it is possible to eliminate some of the difficulties that have plagued other readings of Hegel's political philosophy.

For example, Taylor regards it as "paradoxical" that Hegel's conception of *Sittlichkeit* "enjoins us to bring about what already is".⁷² This is, indeed, a paradoxical obligation if *Sittlichkeit* is interpreted, after Taylor,⁷³ as a static and determinate social entity. But the paradox is removed when *Sittlichkeit* is understood as an historical process that is produced through the subjective universality of individuals, for then they are engaged continuously in advancing an ongoing development. In so far as it is an ongoing process dependent upon individual participation, it is both something that is realized in each consecutive moment, and also something the continuing realization of which requires our continuing input. It is both something that is already realized and that "ought" to be realized, as, for example, through the individual's assertion of further moral principles. Consider a sample of Hegel's language:

The consciously free substance, in which the absolute "ought" is no less an "is", has actuality as the spirit of a nation. The abstract disruption of this spirit singles it out into *persons*, whose independence it, however, controls and entirely dominates from within. But the person, as an intelligent being, feels that underlying essence to be his own very being – ceases when so minded to be a mere accident of it – looks upon it as his absolute final aim. In its actuality he sees not less an achieved present, than somewhat he brings about by his action – yet somewhat which without all question is. Thus, without any selective reflection, the person performs his duty as *his own* and as something which *is*; and in this necessity he has himself and his actual freedom.⁷⁴

Hegel is saying that this substantive process, which he describes as ethical life, differentiates itself into the experience and attitudes of

individual persons in so far as it determines or conditions those experiences and attitudes. In accord with SC, the persons are particulars which nevertheless contain within themselves this universality, which they experience as their “own very being”. Yet this same universality is also their “absolute and final aim” in so far as they give it actuality through its expression in their particular activities. Thus the actualized universal is something that already exists and also something that the individual continuously produces and reproduces. Moreover, in his expression of this universal the individual also realizes himself and thereby actualizes his freedom. Hegel adds that “Because the substance is the absolute unity of individuality and universality of freedom, it follows that the actuality and action of each individual to keep and to take care of his own being, while it is on one hand conditioned by the presupposed total in whose complex alone he exists, is on the other a transition into a universal product.”⁷⁵ The “social disposition of the individuals”, which Hegel regards as a kind of “confidence” or “trust” is “their sense of the substance, and of the identity of all their interests with the total.” In so far as it depends upon the reciprocal universality of the individual and the collectivity, *Sittlichkeit* is expressed and actualized through activities of particular individuals. In Hegel’s words, “The universal must always be realised through the particular.”⁷⁶ He explains that *Sittlichkeit* not only allows for the satisfaction of individual desires, it requires it. “The right of individuals to their *particular* satisfaction is also contained in the ethical order, since particularity is the outward appearance of the ethical order – a mode in which that order is existent.”⁷⁷

In this way Hegel’s conception of *Sittlichkeit* provides a dynamic synthesis of traditional collectivist concerns with modern *Moralität*, so that the latter standpoint is preserved and incorporated in *Sittlichkeit* even while it is transcended. The RU of individual and collectivity depends upon the former’s criticism of the latter no less than the latter’s determination of the former. Thus whereas communitarians often claim to substitute Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* for Kantian *Moralität*, they sometimes arrive at a conception of *Sittlichkeit* that is dismembered beyond recognition. Hegel did not regard *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität* as mutually exclusive. On the contrary, the triumph of the modern state is its dialectical combination of *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität*. Deprived of *Moralität*, *Sittlichkeit* could only be that of the ancients, a dangerous anachronism in the modern world as Hegel observed in his critique of the French Revolution. A *Sittlichkeit* wholly at peace with

its own particularity can have no place in the modern world since there can be no conscious return from the critical self-reflection of subjective universality.

– FAMILY AND CIVIL SOCIETY –

According to Hegel, the family is the natural form of ethical life. Yet it remains incomplete in so far as it is incompatible with the full individuation of its members. The latter leads to the dissolution of the family as the children mature and set out to achieve their personal ambitions. Hegel regards this natural development as expressing a deeper ontological principle, “for the universal substance, as vital, exists only so far as it organically *particularizes* itself”.⁷⁸

The natural disintegration of the family leads to Hegel’s discussion of private satisfaction and possessive individualism in the sphere of civil society. In many respects, civil society is the state as it was understood by the early liberal theorists. “This system”, writes Hegel, “may be *prima facie* regarded as the external state, the state based on need, the state as the Understanding envisages it.”⁷⁹

On the surface, civil society appears as a realm of particularity, wherein individualism is given full expression and economic pursuits are paramount. In this respect, it is a distinctively modern phenomenon which could not have found a place within the polis. Yet Hegel shows that civil society contains a deeper universality which inevitably finds expression through the pursuit of private satisfactions. Thus, in civil society individuals attempt to ignore substantive universality in order to focus on the pursuit of their personal interests. “But the particular person”, as Hegel observes, “is essentially so related to other particular persons that each establishes himself and finds satisfaction by means of the other, and at the same time purely and simply by means of the form of universality, the second principle here.”⁸⁰ The “form of universality” appears initially in the economic sphere through the RU of exchange relations.

When men are thus dependent on one another and reciprocally related to one another in their work and the satisfaction of their needs, subjective self-seeking turns into a contribution to the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else. That is to say, by a dialectical advance, subjective self-seeking turns into the mediation of the particular through the universal, with the result that each man in earning, producing, and enjoying on his own account is *eo ipso* producing and earning for the enjoyment of everyone else.⁸¹

Hegel remarks that “In the course of the actual attainment of selfish ends – an attainment conditioned in this way by universality – there is formed a system of complete interdependence, wherein the livelihood, happiness, and legal status of one man is interwoven with the livelihood, happiness, and rights of all.”⁸² In this system the Idea is present “as the inner necessity behind this outward appearance.”⁸³ “To particularity”, Hegel maintains, the Idea “gives the right to develop and launch forth in all directions; and to universality the right to prove itself . . . the ground and necessary form of particularity.”⁸⁴

In this way, civil society also involves an RU relationship between the particularity of individual desire and an encompassing universality, which Hegel eventually will identify with the state, but which is present in civil society as the underlying interdependence upon which the system of economic exchange is predicated: “Though in civil society universal and particular have fallen apart, yet both are still reciprocally bound together and conditioned. While each of them seems to do just the opposite to the other and supposes that it can exist only by keeping the other at arm’s length, none the less each still conditions the other.”⁸⁵ Hegel underscores the importance of the reciprocal universality of the individual and the collectivity and rejects anachronistic attempts to absorb the particular within the universal. He insists that though

it might seem that universal ends would be more readily attainable if the universal absorbed the strength of the particulars in the way described, for instance, in Plato’s *Republic*. But this, too, is only an illusion, since both universal and particular turn into one another and exist only for and by means of one another. If I further my ends, I further the ends of the universal and this in turn furthers my end.⁸⁶

In this RU relationship, the universal is developed through the pursuit of individual interests: “Hence, a selfish purpose, directed towards its particular self-interest, apprehends and evinces itself at the same time as a universal.”⁸⁷ Hegel says that “The infinitely complex criss-cross, movements of reciprocal production and exchange, and the equally infinite multiplicity of means therein employed, become crystallised, owing to the universality inherent in their content, and distinguished into general groups.”⁸⁸ Such groups include social classes, which Hegel considers in a manner consistent with his interpretation of Plato’s *Republic* as a form of

social differentiation necessary for the expression of particularity and the actualization of concrete universality.

The universality inherent in civil society first becomes explicit in the comprehensive commercial associations that Hegel describes as corporations, and in the administration of justice, which includes judicial and law enforcement agencies. In his discussion of the laws, Hegel significantly observes that “Their content *per se* may be reasonable – or it may be unreasonable and so wrong.”⁸⁹ The rational society is not one in which the laws are sacrosanct, but one in which those laws are judged and evaluated by rational standards. In his discussion of corporations, Hegel describes those broad-scale commercial interests that form a common ground between economic and political spheres. He intends that such associations should provide their members with an introduction to collective issues, and help them to recognize that “[t]his universal is immanent in the interests of particularity itself”.⁹⁰

— SELF-CONTAINMENT AND SUBJECTIVE FREEDOM — IN HEGEL’S THEORY OF THE STATE

Hegel regards the state as that form of *Sittlichkeit* which combines the substantive unity of the family with the individualism of civil society. In his view, the modern state is the first institution of substantive ethical life which allows full scope for subjective freedom and moral autonomy.

Thus, individuals enjoy a position of independence within the state; for they are knowing subjects, in that they can distinguish between their own ego and the universal. Such independence is not to be found within the family, for it is a natural impulse which binds the members of the family together. Only within the state are their powers of internal reflection developed; for in the state, a division arises between that which confronts the individuals as their object, and the position of independence which they occupy in the face of it. This is the moment of rationality whereby the state exists as an inherently concrete entity.⁹¹

Hegel explains that diverse individual interests contribute to the cohesive development of the state such that the individual’s enjoyment of his personal right is at the same time the fulfilment of his public duty: “In the state, as something ethical, as the inter-penetration of the substantive and the particular, my obligation to what is substantive is at the same time the embodiment of my particular freedom. This means

that in the state duty and right are united in one and the same relation.”⁹²

Individual interests, activities and attitudes do not always conform with existing conventions, laws and institutions, but the latter are only a single aspect of the state when considered from the standpoint of OM. On this view, existing conventions, laws and institutions are modified continuously through individual activities, which are influenced, in turn, by newly modified conventions and laws. Thus the state is conceived as a process of historical development that is actualized continuously through the reciprocal interaction of the individual and the collectivity, and advanced, as Hegel says, through the unity of the universal and particular.

The state is actual, and its actuality consists in this, that the interest of the whole is realised in and through particular ends. Actuality is always the unity of universal and particular, the universal dismembered in the particulars which seem to be self-subsistent, although they really are upheld and contained only in the whole.⁹³

In so far as it is developed through its self-differentiation, Hegel regards the state as an organism, which may be regarded as determining, expressing and realizing itself through its component organs. For Hegel, this metaphor serves to describe the relation of the state to both its institutional and its individual components. “For the state”, he writes, “is not an abstraction which stands in opposition to the citizens; on the contrary, they are distinct moments like those of organic life, in which no one member is either a means or an end.”⁹⁴ This is an important point in so far as it dispels the misconception that Hegel regarded individuals as means who could only serve the ends of the state. This misconception is avoided in so far as state and citizens are conceived, in accord with RU, as continuously determining one another. On this view, the state is considered as the process of its own development, which occurs as it differentiates itself among its parts (including institutions, social and economic groups, individual attitudes and interests, etc.) whose activities and functions ensure its further development. According to Hegel

The state is an organism, i.e. the development of the Idea to the articulation of its differences. Thus these different sides of the state are its various powers with their functions and spheres of action, by means of which the universal continually engenders itself in a necessary way; in this process it maintains its identity since it is presupposed even in its own production.⁹⁵

Hegel's conception of political organism follows from the characteristic self-containment of the Idea. His view is not simply that the whole provides a functional framework for the parts, but that each part also contains and expresses the whole.⁹⁶ For example, after describing the constitution of the state as "the organisation of the state and the self-related process of its organic life",⁹⁷ he explains that "The constitution is rational in so far as the state is inwardly differentiated and determines its activity in accordance with the nature of the concept. The result of this is that each of these powers is in itself the totality of the constitution, because *each contains the other moments and has them effective in itself* . . ."⁹⁸

It will be argued that the principle of self-containment is the key to understanding the Hegelian state with its unity of universal and particular. Chapter 2 argued that an abnormal class may be regarded as a unity (nondifferentiation) of universality and particularity since it is both a class and a member of that class. The same discussion showed that such classes may be conceived as engendering a process of development in accord with a dialectical pattern or structure. This process also may be regarded as a unification of universality and particularity since it involves a repeated interpenetration of these categories in accord with RU.

The following discussion will suggest that similar considerations support Hegel's conception of the state as the unity of universality and particularity, and it will offer at least three additional considerations that sustain an application of OM to an interpretation of Hegel's theory of the state. First, the state may be modelled on the principle of self-containment in so far as it contains those citizens who reciprocally include the state as an object of their consciousness, or as a particular in relation to their subjective universality. Second, the Hegelian state may be conceived as the process of its own development in accord with RU. The latter principle is illustrated, for example, in Hegel's claim that the political whole is realized only through the particular.

Finally, OM adds clarity and coherence to Hegel's theory of the state. Chapter 2 demonstrated that the contradictory and paradoxical aspects of abnormal classes may be resolved when such classes are interpreted not as static, determinate entities but as processes of dialectical development. In a similar way, many of the paradoxical or apparently contradictory aspects of Hegel's political philosophy are resolved when his conceptions of *Sittlichkeit* and the state are interpreted not as static, determinate entities but as designating a

dialectical process of historical development powered by the RU of the individual and the collectivity.

This may be contrasted with a more traditional conception of the state as a determinate set of institutions, laws and conventions existing at some particular time and place. Such a state might be conceived as a class which is normal in so far as its members are individual citizens which do not contain the state as a particular in relation to their subjective universality. But an approach that treats the state as abstractly (or one-sidedly) universal and treats its citizens as abstractly particular must prove to be inherently nondynamic and ahistorical since it separates content from form and forsakes a methodology for the continuous self-determination of the state. Chapter 2 showed that self-determination may be conceived as a feature of self-containment, such that a state that is structured in accord with SC is fundamentally historical. Within this framework, the collectivity may be conceived as determining the individual no more than the individuals are conceived as determining the collectivity. As a consequence of their RU, each determines the other throughout an historical process that contains and unites the individual and the collectivity as its components. Individuals then are understood to identify themselves not with the community as it exists at any particular time but rather with the historical process of its development, the process in which these individuals continuously participate in order to express themselves, to realize their purposes and thereby to determine their collectivity. Thus Hegel's historicist theory of the state follows from logical requirements concerning the structure of self-containment and the union of content and form. The form of the Idea is expressed in a reciprocal determination of ethical content, entwining and enveloping the collectivity and its individual members within a continuous process of self-determination and historical development.

Because the state is structured according to SC it is self-determining and necessarily differentiates itself among its constituent institutions, as among private attitudes and interests of its individual citizens. Each of these parts presupposes the whole from out of which it is differentiated. Yet, in accord with Hegel's doctrine of the concept,⁹⁹ the whole is incompletely expressed in each of these parts. Because each part, when taken by itself, is inadequate to the whole, Hegel maintains that there is a kind of organic necessity by which each part implies its complements. The political whole can be adequately expressed, and actualized, only through this mutual implication and reciprocal interplay among its component parts. In his words, "Necessity consists in

this, that the whole is sundered into the differences of the concept and that this divided whole yields a fixed and permanent determinacy, though one which is not fossilised but perpetually recreates itself in its dissolution.”¹⁰⁰

The last point is particularly important for, in accord with the OM, it is through its self-differentiation that the state is continuously recreated. In other words, the state is conceived as differentiated into, and determined in the form of its parts, whether these are conceived as its institutional components, informal sub-groups or individual citizens. But, in accord with RU, each of these parts, which is determined or conditioned by the whole, also acts to determine the latter, since the whole is conceived as being particularized and determined in relation to that universality implicit in each of its parts. This might take the form of political criticism or political action undertaken by individuals or subgroups (that is, minorities, interest groups, churches, etc.), or institutional components of the state (that is, a legislature or a court). Thus, the state is conceived as a dynamic and continuously evolving whole, which is constantly determining its parts, and as constantly being determined and recreated by interactions among those parts and between each of the parts and the whole. And this, as Hegel suggests, is the basis for a conception of political organism compatible with the subjective freedom of the modern world.

This organism is the development of the Idea to its differences and their objective actuality. Hence these different members are the various powers of the state with their functions and spheres of action, by means of which the universal continually engenders itself . . . Throughout this process the universal maintains its identity, since it is itself the presupposition of its own production. This organism is the constitution of the state.¹⁰¹

This principle of self-containment lends a structure to the development of the state which previously has been identified with subjectivity and which acquires a substantive significance in this context: “For the state has a life-giving soul, and the soul which animates it is subjectivity, which creates differences and yet at the same time holds them together in unity.”¹⁰² OM implies a process of ontological development which is understood as subjective in so far as it is identical with the development of self-consciousness. Through his description of the state as animated by subjectivity Hegel is saying not only that the state must be considered as a process of development in accord with

the same ontological structure, but that the state's development is impelled through the subjective expressions of its individual members. Hegel explains that, "The principle of the modern states has prodigious strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to progress to its culmination in the extreme of self-subsistent personal particularity, and yet at the same time brings it back to the substantive unity and so maintains this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself."¹⁰³ The principle of subjective freedom is expressed in the state in a variety of ways, including private property, moral judgements, commercial activities and, as Hegel adds, through public opinion.

The formal subjective freedom of individuals consists in their having and expressing their own private judgements, opinions and recommendations on affairs of state. This freedom is collectively manifested as what is called "public opinion", in which what is absolutely universal, the substantive and the true, is linked with its opposite, the purely particular and private opinions of the Many.¹⁰⁴

It is often said that Hegel is prepared to sacrifice individual freedom to authority.

But at all times public opinion has been a great power and it is particularly so in our day when the principle of subjective freedom has such great importance and significance. What is to be authoritative nowadays derives its authority, not at all from force, only to a small extent from habit and custom, really from insight and argument.¹⁰⁵

To be sure, public opinion played a powerful role in the Athenian assembly, but the modern state is distinguished from its classical counterpart not only by the separation of private from public spheres but also through a recognition of the role of the former in the historical development of the latter.

In the states of classical antiquity, universality was present, but particularity had not then been released, given free scope, and brought back to universality, i.e. to the universal end of the whole. The essence of the modern state is that the universal be bound up with the complete freedom of its particular members and with private well-being . . . the universal end cannot be advanced without the personal knowledge and will of its particular members, whose own rights must be maintained. Thus the universal must be furthered, but subjectivity on the other hand must attain its full and living development. It is only when both these moments subsist in

their strength that the state can be regarded as articulated and genuinely organized.¹⁰⁶

In his own time, Hegel believed, the individual was finally capable of recognizing the role of subjectivity in the substantive development of the state. As a consequence of this recognition, individuals would self-consciously pursue the historical development of their community. In doing so, they would continue to advance their particular interests, just as before, but they would do so with an understanding of the role of their particular self-assertion in the universal development of the political system. Through the development of the state, as Hegel explains, subjective freedom would thereby gain its concrete realization, as the advancement of particular interests contributed to the advancement of substantive universality.

The state is the actuality of concrete freedom. But concrete freedom consists in this, that personal individuality and its particular interests not only achieve their complete development and gain explicit recognition for their right (as they do in the sphere of the family and civil society) but, for one thing, they also pass over of their own accord into the interest of the universal, and, for another thing, they know and will the universal; they even recognise it as their own substantive mind; they take it as their end and aim and are active in its pursuit. The result is that the universal does not prevail or achieve completion except along with particular interests and through the co-operation of particular knowing and willing; and individuals likewise do not live as private persons for their own ends alone, but in the very act of willing these they will the universal in the light of the universal, and their activity is consciously aimed at none but the universal end.¹⁰⁷

When the individual wills the universal, he does not necessarily acquiesce in the laws and conventions of his society nor does he necessarily accept its institutional structure, for these are not what Hegel means by the universal. Rather the universal is the process of historical development that results from the “complete development” of “particular interests” in relation to any particular stage of substantive universality and its expression in existing laws and institutions. Thus, when the individual “wills the universal”, he contributes to this process, in part, through the assertion of his particular interests. In willing the universal, he does not acquiesce but contributes to the creation of the laws and institutions of his society. In so far as the individual comes to be aware of the significance of his particular

contribution to the development of the universal, and thereby recognizes the state as the realization of his own subjective freedom, Hegel maintains that the "State is the *self-conscious* ethical substance."¹⁰⁸ It is an ethical substance expressed in the laws and customs of a nation, and recognized therein by the subject.¹⁰⁹

In accord with SC, any condition of self-consciousness involves a relationship of reciprocal universality, occurring in this case between the individuals and the state. On the one hand, the laws of the state are conscious expressions of the individuals that (directly or indirectly) create them, while, on the other hand, the laws infuse and determine all of the interactions occurring between the individuals of the society.

The laws express the special provisions for objective freedom. First, to the immediate agent, his independent self-will and particular interest, they are restrictions. But, secondly, they are an absolute final end and the universal work: hence they are a product of the "functions" of the various orders which parcel themselves more and more out of the general particularising, and are a fruit of all the acts and private concerns of individuals. Thirdly, they are the substance and the volition of individuals – which volition is thereby free . . .¹¹⁰

Thus the reciprocal universality of the individual and the community should not be confused with their abstract opposition. To presume such an opposition is to mistake the determinate social order of a given time and place with the historical process of political development that Hegel understands as the state. It is to confuse the temporally particular with the truly universal. The state is not that which is opposed to the individual but is rather that unified process of development which advances by means of all of those oppositions occurring within the society. Hence, Hegel contends that

There is something perverse about such contrasts between the people and the government, a malicious artifice designed to imply that the people, divorced from the government, themselves constitute the whole. So long as such ideas are countenanced, it cannot be said that the state – which is the unity of the universal and the particular will – is really present. On the contrary, the state still has to be created. The rational concept of the state has left such abstract antitheses behind it; and those who treat them as if they were necessary know nothing of the nature of the state. For the state has this unity as its basis, and it is this which constitutes its being and its substance . . . it is a system of organs, of distinct spheres, of particular universalities which are intrinsically independent but whose function is to create the whole and thereby to annul their own independence.¹¹¹

The state is the unity of those “particular universalities” whose inherent independence contributes to the creation of a whole within which they are integrated. Such a concept of “particular universalities” generating a whole within which they are unified and subsumed would be incoherent, or even contradictory, without a notion of RU. For Hegel the “state is . . . its inward structure as self-relating development”.¹¹² It is not merely a current set of laws and institutions, but is rather the historical process of development, which follows from its inward or self-contained structure and the self-relation of its reciprocal universality. “The essence of the state”, says Hegel, “is the universal, self-originated, and self-developed -- the reasonable spirit of will; but, as self-knowing and self-actualising, sheer subjectivity.”¹¹³ The state is an historical process of development occurring in accord with the self-contained, self-developing structure of subjectivity. This occurs when the substantive universality of any current set of laws and institutions is replaced by a new and higher universality in relation to which the preceding ethical arrangements are limited and particularized. The new and higher level universality of this subsequent form of ethical life is determined from out of that higher level nondifferentiation, which follows from the self-containment of subjectivity, or the universe as a whole, and which Hegel describes as the Idea. Hence Hegel discusses “the origin of this second universal in connection with the development of the Idea. It does not fall within the limits of the ethical community . . . an ethical whole is . . . of a limited nature, it has above it a higher universal which creates a dichotomy within it”.¹¹⁴

In accord with Hegel’s metaphilosophy, the transition to the higher form of ethical life occurs when the preceding set of institutions and laws is particularized in relation to subjective universality. This occurs when the individual recognizes the limitations and contradictions inherent in the preceding form. Hegel regards the higher form of universality as implicitly present in its predecessor in the form of those subjective principles and ideas in relation to which existing arrangements will come to appear inadequate and obsolete.

The transition from one phase of the spirit to another can only take place in so far as an earlier universal is overcome (*aufgehoben*) and recognised in its particularity through the activity of thought. The higher universal which supersedes it is, so to speak, the next variety of the previous species, and is already inwardly present within it, although it has not yet come into its own; and it is this which makes the present reality unstable and fragmentary.¹¹⁵

From Schiller, Hegel had learned that fragmentation occurs in the service of historical development. On the one hand, the lives of individuals are determined by the community in which they live, such that their private activities may be viewed as expressions of this common life. But, on the other hand, their activities are also shaped by their subjective reflections, and consequently lead to alterations in the collectivity which culminate in the fragmentation of the preceding form of life.

One of the essential moments in history is the preservation of the individual nation or state and the preservation of the ordered departments of its life. And the activity of individuals consists in participating in the common cause and helping to further it in all its particular aspects; for it is by this means that ethical life is preserved. But the second moment in history is that the further existence of the national spirit is interrupted (inasmuch as it has exhausted itself and worked itself out to its conclusion) in order that world history and the world spirit may continue in their course. Neither the position of individuals within the ethical whole nor their moral attitudes and duties need be discussed here, for we are concerned only with the development, progress, and ascent of the spirit towards a higher concept of itself. But this is accompanied by the debasement, fragmentation, and destruction of the preceding mode of reality which had already developed its concept to the full.¹¹⁶

Whereas this development occurs in accord with the Idea, it is brought about through the subjective activities of individuals. Hegel emphasizes that this involves a fundamental conflict between existing laws and institutions, on the one hand, and those new possibilities that derive from subjective reflection. In line with Hegel's metaphilosophy, the latter are the seeds of a higher level universality in relation to which the existing social order is limited and particularized, and they grow to fruition in the form a higher level universality, a new social order representing a further stage in the development of the Idea. As Hegel explains:

All this takes place to some extent automatically through the inner development of the Idea; yet, on the other hand, the Idea is itself the product of factors outside itself, and it is implemented and brought to its realisation by the actions of individuals. It is precisely at this point that we encounter those great collisions between established and acknowledged duties, laws, and rights on the one hand, and new possibilities which conflict with the existing system and violate it or even destroy its very foundations and continued existence, on the other (although their content

may well appear equally good and for the most part propitious, essential and necessary). These new possibilities then become part of history. They incorporate a universal of a different order from that on which the continued existence of a nation or state is based. For the universal they embody is a moment of the productive Idea itself, of that truth which works its way on to its own realisation.¹¹⁷

When we finally come to understand the state self-consciously, in terms of the development of the Idea, then we no longer identify it with any particular stage in this process. We no longer regard it as any particular form of laws and institutions associated with a determinate place and time, but rather understand the state as the historical process of its own development through a sequence of these particular stages, a process wherein the state's empirical development expresses the development of the rational idea of the state. This process of development occurs throughout world history, and passes across the surface of the earth as, one after another, particular states succeed in lending expression to consecutive stages in the development of the Idea.

The ancient Greeks identified themselves with the determinate laws and institutions of particular city-states, and were incapable of coping with the cultural fragmentation that resulted from the subjective challenge to that determinate way of life that sprang from Socrates and the Sophists. This failure resulted in a fragmentation of the ancient unity of cosmos, community and individual; and in turn, this fragmentation has inspired a series of attempted resolutions that have spanned the course of world history and led to developments in science, philosophy and politics that have occupied the preceding chapters. On the one hand, these attempts have been counterproductive in so far as they have produced those proliferated forms of fragmentation that have come to characterize the modern world. Yet they have also produced the development of that self-consciousness which is capable of cognizing and finally comprehending itself.

Thus, whereas the ancient Greek was capable of identifying with the determinate order of a particular state, the modern individual can rarely give his complete allegiance to any determinate order. This is because his own subjective universality has developed to the point that he sees the limitations and contradictions inherent in any given social system. To the extent that the modern individual is incapable of identifying with his particular state, it is because that particular social

order provides an inadequate expression of his subjective principles, expectations and needs. Hence, he can identify himself with any particular state only in so far as the latter allows for its own transformation in accord with rational criteria. As a consequence of his subjective universality, the modern individual stands always with one foot in the present and one foot in the future. Just as Socrates identified himself at once with the laws of Athens and with those of universal reason, so the modern individual sees the need for the rational improvement of his society.

Yet whereas Athens could not brook a contradiction such as that expressed by Socrates, the modern state has come to incorporate and to continuously construct and reconstruct itself about a similar contradiction. Over the space of twenty-five hundred years, we have learned to fashion states that are open to the process of their own continuous transformation in accord with rational criteria, derived from the universality of subjectivity and expressed through the subjective freedom of individual action and public opinion. Thus, whereas the ancient Greek was capable of identifying only with the state as a determinate set of laws and institutions, the self-conscious individual is capable only of identifying with the state as a process of historical development in accord with rational criteria.

In Hegel's view, this process ultimately must encompass the limitations of a sequence of political systems occurring at consecutive dialectical levels throughout world history. We identify with our own ethical order through our recognition of its place in this process. We can be satisfied with the limitations of our political system only in so far as we work to overcome them, thereby contributing to the development of the process in accord with RU.

– THE HISTORICAL DIALECTIC –

Because Hegel conceives the state as a process of historical development, the development of his theory of the state in *PR* culminates with his philosophy of world history. The state, in other words, is most adequately conceived as the process of its own historical development and, as Hegel explains, history is the process through which mind becomes conscious of itself. Hence, Hegel conceives the state in terms of its contribution to the historical development of self-consciousness. This development occurs through the pattern described by OM wherein a recognition of limitations appearing at one stage is a transition to a new and higher level.¹¹⁸

In this historical context, this pattern of development is applied to the transition from one determinate social order to the next. Each of the determinate orders which appears in this process is described by Hegel as a national “spirit” or “mind” in so far as it involves a particular outlook on the organization of society and the conduct of human life. Hegel associates each of these outlooks with a particular nation which he considers as best expressing the requirements of the Idea, and therefore leading the development of world history in any given era. This is to say, in part, that a nation which leads the world, at any particular point in time, has attained that position of leadership in so far as it has been able to find solutions for the limitations, contradictions and internal conflicts that eventually undermined the preceding hegemon. In the passage below Hegel emphasizes that this development involves a dialectic of reciprocal relation and limitation. Through the RU of the individual and his society, as well as through international struggles, there develops the meta-universality of the world historical process, to which individual nations are related as particular determinations.

The principles of the national minds are wholly restricted on account of their particularity, for it is in this particularity that, as existent individuals, they have their objective actuality and their self-consciousness. Their deeds and destinies in their reciprocal relations to one another are the dialectic of the finitude of these minds, and out of it arises the universal mind, the mind of the world, free from all restriction, producing itself as that which exercises its right – and its right is the highest right of all – over these finite minds in the “history of the world which is the world’s court of judgement”.¹¹⁹

If world history is to be regarded as a methodical process of development, then there must be some basis for comparing one social order to another. In so far as it is subject to inherent limitations and contradictions, Hegel argues that each particular social order is historically transcended. That succeeding social order which asserts a measure of world hegemony has found means of addressing or resolving those limitations and conflicts that undermined its predecessor. Hence, that succeeding social order may be regarded as representing a condition of universality in relation to the particularities and limitations of its predecessor. In terms of OM, the succeeding social order represents a condition of higher level universality in so far as it includes elements that are excluded at the lower level occupied by its historical predecessor. Those elements that are

included at the higher level are the solutions to those problems that undermined its predecessor precisely because the earlier social order did not include them. Further limitations eventually are discovered in this higher level order, which lead to its transition to yet a new and higher order.

Throughout world history, the universality of each epoch eventually is particularized in relation to the higher level universality of a new social order. But the historical process itself which produces each of these particular universals is a kind of meta-universal or, in Hegel's words, an "absolute universality" which reveals, evaluates and, in that sense, judges, the limitations of each of its consecutive determinations. "World history is a court of judgement", Hegel continues, "because in its absolute universality, the particular – i.e. . . . civil society and the national minds in their variegated actuality – is present as only ideal, and the movement of mind in this element is the exhibition of that fact."¹²⁰ But Hegel also identifies the transcendence of particularity and limitation throughout this dialectical process with the realization of reason and freedom, and it is these terms that Hegel articulates his standard of historical judgement.

– REASON –

Within the Hegelian system the terms self-consciousness, subjectivity, spirit, reason, freedom, the concept and the Idea are given interlocking definitions, and may be regarded as representations in differing contexts for the underlying principle of self-containment and the self-determining dialectical development through which it is expressed.¹²¹ In so far as it is based upon the self-containment of the Idea, reason involves a unity of the universal and particular. In the passage below, Hegel makes this point in a general way and then applies it in a political context, where he emphasizes that reason is the unity of substantive and subjective forms of freedom.

Rationality, taken generally and in the abstract, consists in the thorough-going unity of the universal and the single. Rationality, concrete in the state, consists (a) so far as its content is concerned, in the unity of objective freedom (i.e. freedom of the universal or substantial will) and subjective freedom (i.e. freedom of everyone in his knowing and in his volition of particular ends); and consequently, (b) so far as its form is concerned, in self-determining action on laws and principles which are thoughts and so universal. This Idea is the absolutely eternal and necessary being of mind.¹²²

The state is the unity of substantive and subjective freedom and therefore involves individuals in “self-determining action on laws and principles”. Hegel notes that the latter are universals which determine the particular activities of individuals, and which therefore constitute “the universal or substantial will”. But the self-determining action of individuals upon these laws follows from their subjective freedom, as expressed through their “volition of particular ends”. Thus, in accord with RU, the laws determine the particular activities of individuals, and the particular activities of individuals determine the laws. On the one hand, individual activities may be viewed as particulars in relation to the substantive universality of the laws. On the other hand, the subjective universality of the individual is such that he experiences these same laws as particular objects of his thoughts, which consequently are accessible to his alteration. By way of their RU relationship the laws and the individuals serve to develop one another. This process of development is history. It is the unity of universal and particular, substantive and subjective, and it is what Hegel understands as rationality concrete in the state. The concrete rationality of the modern state, which turns on the RU of the individual and the collectivity, is what distinguishes it from its ancient predecessor.

The development of particularity to self-subsistence is the moment which appeared in the ancient world as an invasion of ethical corruption and as the ultimate cause of that world’s downfall. Some of these ancient states were built on the patriarchal and religious principle, others on the principle of an ethical order which was more explicitly intellectual, though still comparatively simple; in either case they rested on primitive unsophisticated intuition. Hence, they could not withstand the disruption of this state of mind when self-consciousness was infinitely reflected into itself; when this reflection began to emerge, they succumbed to it, first in spirit and then in substance, because the simple principle underlying them lacked the truly infinite power to be found only in that unity which allows both sides of the antithesis of reason to develop themselves separately in all their strength and which has so overcome the antithesis that it maintains itself in it and integrates it in itself.¹²³

The two sides of the antithesis are the particular and the universal, whose dialectic began when self-consciousness was “infinitely reflected into itself”. This occurred when the self became conscious of itself, as a form of universality in relation to which the state was particularized. Yet despite passages such as these, many interpretations of Hegel import a

rigid separation of state and individual wherein these terms are held apart, such that the state is only universal and the individual is only particular. Such interpretations have supposed that Hegel intended the individual to conform to the requirements of the state, albeit a rationally ordered state. However, this would mean that the particular would merely be absorbed within, or subjugated to, the universal.

Instead what Hegel has in mind is a particular that is also universal and a universal that is also particular. Together they constitute what Hegel describes as a “unity which allows both sides of the antithesis of reason to develop themselves separately in all their strength and which has so overcome the antithesis that it maintains itself in it and integrates it in itself”. It does not so much eliminate the traditional antithesis between the individual and the state as preserve it. It advances itself through their antithesis since it is their relationship of reciprocal universality. Like the intuitive outlook of the ancients, it unites universality and particularity, but like the modern understanding, it also recognizes their distinction.

This is the basis for Hegel’s suggestive commentary on the “cunning of reason”. He writes that “The universal must always be realised through the particular”, and then adds that “Particular things compete with one another; but they also destroy themselves.”¹²⁴ The universal can be actualized only in so far as it is particularized and determined in RU relations, which may be characterized in terms of opposition and competition. But in so far as it is particularized it is also limited and finite. It determines itself in the form of many states and many individuals throughout the long course of history, for its self-containment requires that it is necessarily self-developing, and its development requires the reciprocal universality of those who are destroyed through their determinacy.

The particular interests of passion cannot therefore be separated from the realisation of the universal; for the universal arises out of the particular and determinate and its negation. The particular has its own interests in world history; it is of a finite nature, and as such, it must perish. Particular interests contend with one another, and some are destroyed in the process. But *it is* from this very conflict and destruction of particular things that the universal emerges, and it remains unscathed itself. For it is not the universal Idea which enters into opposition, conflict, and danger; it keeps itself in the background, untouched and unharmed, and sends forth the particular interests of passion to fight and wear themselves out in its stead. It is what we may call the *cunning of reason* that it sets the passions to work in the service, so that the agents by which it gives itself existence must pay the penalty and suffer the loss.¹²⁵

The colourful language of such passages has led some commentators (Taylor, for example) to the misconception that individuals are little more than “vehicles” of a manipulative *Geist*. Such interpretations are misleading in that they miss the fundamental point of Hegel’s treatment of substance and subjectivity, universality and particularity, and most importantly, self-consciousness. The individual is not a vehicle of *Geist*. The individual is *Geist*. Or more precisely, at the higher level of his subjectivity, the individual is *Geist*. At the lower level he is an object of (his own) consciousness, which is to say, a finite, determinate individual in any ordinary sense of the term. But his lower level particularization is a necessary consequence of the self-containment of the universe as a whole. And through this reciprocal universality individuals develop and realize themselves as they realize the Idea. Hence, an important clarification directly follows the passage above: “And the relationship of human beings to the end of reason is least of all that of a means in this purely external sense for in fulfilling the end of reason, they not only simultaneously fulfil their own particular ends (whose content is quite different from that of the universal end), but also *participate* in the end of reason itself, and are therefore ends in their own right.”¹²⁶ Through this give and take, the subjective interests of the individual are integrated with the substantive interests of the collectivity in the ongoing synthesis that Hegel describes as ethical life. Hence, “if I further my ends, I further the ends of the universal, and this in turn furthers my end”.¹²⁷ The Idea is the inner principle of self-containment which is expressed through the RU of the collectivity and the individual. And the state is the historical process of development that results from this interaction, or, in Hegel’s words:

The subjective will – or passion – is the activating and realising principle; the Idea is the inner essence, and the state is the reality of ethical life in the present. For the state is the unity of the universal essential will and the will of the subject, and it is this which constitutes ethical life . . .¹²⁸

Hegel realistically regards this process as occurring through individual efforts at personal gratification, and he remarks that “nothing great has been accomplished without passion”.¹²⁹ Yet, as a consequence of subjective universality, individual passions are mediated by universal principles.

The individual agents pursue finite ends and particular interests in their activity; but they are also knowing and thinking beings. For this reason, the

content of their ends is interwoven with universal and essential determinations of justice, goodness, duty, and the like. For mere desires and barbarous or uncultivated forms of volition fall outside the sphere of world history and play no part in it.¹³⁰

Throughout this process of development limitations in both the individual and the state are overcome as each undergoes successive transitions to higher dialectical levels. In this respect, Hegel conceives reason as a process of overcoming constraints. Reason is the faculty through which we continuously rise to new and higher levels, from which we are able to comprehend and recognize connections between those phenomena that are differentiated, or even contradictory, when considered at a lower level. Hegel contrasts reason (*Vernunft*) with a lesser intellectual faculty which he describes as the understanding (*Verstand*). The understanding is that commonplace mentality which is concerned with the maintenance of distinctions. In Hegel's words, the "metaphysics of the understanding" remains "dogmatic because it maintains half-truths in their isolation", while a truly rational philosophy "carries out the principle of totality and shows that it can reach beyond the inadequate formulations of abstract thought".¹³¹

In this respect, Hegelian reason acquires some of the transcendental features of its Kantian predecessor; but where Kantian reason intuited the totality (thereby respecting traditional epistemological boundaries), Hegelian reason is the totality. It is the totality in the process of continually determining itself as the phenomenal content of experience.

Now if reason is a process of identifying and overcoming limitations, then it will have two closely related results. First, any entity that endures this process will become increasingly well-adapted. Second, the process will tend to produce and refine a rationally integrated set of determinations. These two points will be considered in order.

From an Hegelian standpoint anything that exists is determinate and therefore limited. Eventually these limitations are overcome, but if the entity endures this transformation, and does not cease to exist, then its preceding limitations will be replaced by new limitations. These higher level limitations are generally more encompassing (that is, they comprehend those lower level limitations that were previously transcended) than those at the lower level, but they are often experienced as being more complicated or more sophisticated. Thus, the simple problems of childhood are replaced by those of maturity. Societies learn to solve some kinds of problems as they

develop, but inevitably these are replaced by more complicated problems.

Development, then, is a matter of progressively identifying and transcending one's inherent limitations. Such development is progressive because certain subtle limitations cannot be identified within earlier, cruder forms of existence, which are subject to much more glaring deficiencies. It is only when these are overcome in more advanced forms that the subtler limitations can be identified and transcended.

In this respect, development is adaptation.¹³² Yet it is not an adaptation that implies brute force, for power is ultimately understood to derive from a system's sophistication at dealing with its own inherent limitations. If it has developed long and far in terms of its ability to resolve its own internal problems, then it will wield external power; and conversely, brute force ultimately cannot preserve a corrupt system. History is replete with illustrations from the Greek triumph over Persia to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

This leads to a second standard of Hegelian rationality. As a system undergoes this development and transcends its inherent limitations, it generates a rationally and organically interconnected network of internal differentiations. Here we return to the view of reason as a connective function, but a function which also differentiates and determines that which it serves to connect. For example, we have seen that Hegel finds this rationality expressed in the constitution, which "inwardly differentiates and determines" the activities of the state "in accordance with the nature of the concept".¹³³ The concept is the universal expressed in the constitution of the state which realizes its rationality through its differentiation in a system of inter-related institutions and laws. The self-differentiation of the constitution evokes SC since "each of these powers is itself the totality of the constitution, and contains the other moments and has them effective within itself".¹³⁴ It thereby gives rise to a network of RU relations among its formal-legal components as well as among its informal subgroups and individual citizens.

The latter are determined by the laws and institutions of the state, and act, in turn, to further determine those laws and institutions. Through this process the subjective universality of the citizens provides for the criticism and modification of deficiencies and irregularities in the formal-legal structure of the society, while reciprocally the laws and institutions operate as universals which help individuals to overcome deficiencies in their ethical development. As

standards of subjective universality are thereby elevated to new and higher levels, individuals are reciprocally more critical and demanding of their laws and institutions, and so on.

Through this process inadequacies, irregularities and difficulties in those laws and institutions are gradually overcome, as they are integrated within an increasingly coherent framework of determinations. Hegel refers to this process as reason, and its result is a rational system of laws and institutions. Of course, some irrational elements will remain in that system since new problems are generated with each dialectical transition, but these will be refined through further development, and it is the process of development itself which Hegel regards both as reason and as the state.

Reason is able to modify praxis in so far as reason transcends existing distinctions by rising to a new and higher level of dialectical development, as, for example, when we criticize and reform conventions, laws and institutions. Chapter 2 showed that a self-containing class could be conceived as a process of dialectical development, generating in its “wake” a hierarchy of “normal” class relations among sets and their members. Such relations of inclusion and exclusion are at the core of traditional conceptions of rationality, as explored, for example, by categorical logic. Hegel’s point is that logicians are able to find class relationships among the elements of their experience because the structure of human reason follows from the self-containment of subjectivity, the same self-containment responsible for the evolution of the universe and the determination of the objects of experience. His innovation is an explanation of these class relations (which are simply presupposed by standard logicians) as generated by, and following from, the dialectical advance of reason to levels that are higher and more inclusive as a consequence of the self-containment of consciousness. Now it is this dialectical advance that leads reason to transcend existing distinctions, as, for example, in the criticism and reform of conventions, laws and institutions. But here Hegel’s conception of subjective self-containment invokes a further innovation through the feature of reciprocity that it implies. Unlike standard logic, class relations of inclusion and exclusion are not static and unidirectional. Rather they acquire a dynamism through that multi-directionality that follows from their self-containment and reciprocity. The universal contains the particular within which it is itself contained. For example, Chapter 2 observed that if a particular book is found to display the universal “red”, this can also be reversed such that “book” is the universal for which red

books are particulars. The preceding discussion has shown how such relations of reciprocal universality may be conceived as producing the historical development of an organization such as the state; and it is these relations of reciprocal inclusion that produce the self-reflective, self-referential integration, coherence and interconnection of a rational social organism. Hegelian reason is the structured activity of self-containment in the process of producing and organizing an integrated system of determinations, and an organization is rational in so far as it endures and develops as a consequence of such activity.

No doubt the procedures and rules of many groups undergo a similar evolution, but few social subgroups determine the activities of their members as effectively and as comprehensively as the state; and all subgroups are incorporated as components within the state's historical development. Hence, the state is the fundamental medium for rational development. In Hegel's words, "Only in the state does man have a rational existence."¹³⁵ Of course, this has led to misinterpretations by those who have misunderstood Hegel's treatment of the state as the process of rational development, or ignored his frequent reminders that irrational states either fail or fall aside. Thus the first line of the following passage has received far more attention than the second.

The march of God in the world, that is what the state is. The basis of the state is the power of reason actualising itself as will.¹³⁶

This has been read as an apology for imperialism and expansionism on the part of existing states. But we have seen that Hegel is not using the term "state" with reference to any current state or to any state existing in any determinate time and place. Rather the state is the process of political development throughout world history. This occurs through a succession of determinate political systems, a progression which Hegel regards as moving step by step from east to west, and which gives rise to modes of organization that are increasingly rational and free. A state like Nazi Germany, whose inherent irrationality was expressed in its expansionist totalitarianism, necessarily fails.¹³⁷ Historical development follows from the self-containment of the universe as a whole (or God), and is identified by Hegel as the power of reason actualizing itself through the wills of individuals.

It is because he understands reason as the process of development through which the cosmological totality and the individual's will are

jointly actualized that Hegel offers his classic dictum: "What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational."¹³⁸ If "rational" is interpreted as referring to a static condition rather than a process of development, then this statement appears as an apology for the status quo. However, the treatment of reason as a dynamic concept leads to a different interpretation. If reason is the process of historical development, then that which is determined or developed in the course of this process is rational. And if reason is a process of continuous development, then Hegel's dictum has anything but conservative implications since all that has been actualized is limited and therefore is subject to further transformation.

Hegel's declaration that what is rational is actual is an affirmation of his view that reason actualizes itself in the world, or that the totality (which is identified with reason in the same paragraph) is actualized through the process of its historical development. His assertion that actuality is rational is a recognition of the evolutionary nature of all existence, a declaration that is anything but complacent. Yet it requires that we acknowledge the significance of existing arrangements, even as they are altered. The present epoch, for all its limitations, is a stage in the process of historical development instilled with an element of ontological necessity and a glint of cosmological significance. The present, in Hegel's words, is a "cross" not only in the sense that we are burdened with its inadequacies, but also in that it is a frame for the travails of human struggle and a crucible of spiritual transformation. Rational insight is the fruit of that struggle and the key to its meaning, which situates us in the present while sustaining that subjective freedom through which we shall effect its transformation.

To recognise reason as the rose in the cross of the present and thereby to enjoy the present, this is the rational insight which reconciles us to the actual, the reconciliation in which philosophy affords to those in whom there has once arisen an inner voice bidding them to comprehend, not only to dwell in what is substantive while still retaining subjective freedom, but also to possess subjective freedom while standing not in anything particular and accidental but in what exists absolutely.¹³⁹

– FREEDOM –

The significance of this passage is closely related to Hegel's conception of the union of freedom and necessity. Consider the following passage in which Hegel describes *Sittlichkeit* as those institutions, laws

and conventions which derive through the rational self-determination of the Idea:

It is the fact that the ethical order is the system of these specific determinations of the Idea which constitutes its rationality. Hence the ethical order is freedom or the absolute will as what is objective, a circle of necessity whose moments are the ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals.¹⁴⁰

Through its expression in these laws and institutions reason gives rise to an ethical content which is no less rational in form. On the surface, this simply means that people in political systems create institutions and use them to formulate and enforce laws. To say that they are rational in form is to say that they are artefacts of an historical process of political development, powered by relations of reciprocal universality, that produced and modified preceding laws and institutions in relation to the subjective universality of critical individuals, and eventually generated this “system of specific determinations of the Idea”. This process has imbued them with elements of interconnection, systematization and regularity, and it will gradually imbue them with more.

This ethical content is Hegel’s solution to the problem of Kantian morality. Whereas Hegel demonstrated that the criteria of subjective rationality and freedom were insufficient for the provision of adequate ethical content, the Hegelian subject derives exactly that from the substantively rational laws and conventions of his social order. Yet this substantive order is able to provide the individual with a rational ethical content only in so far as it results from an historical development incorporating a continuous critique of the substantive order by subjective universality.

In so far as the individual derives ethical content from his social order he is freed from the capriciousness of impulse and inclination. For Hegel freedom begins with the individual’s recognition that the laws of the state reflect “his own essence of rationality”.¹⁴¹ He says that in its obedience to the law, the will “obeys itself and, being in itself, is free”.¹⁴² But if the will is to find itself reflected in the law then law must incorporate subjective freedom.¹⁴³

This theme is developed extensively in the fifth entry of Hegel’s introduction to the *PR*. Freedom requires that the individual must ascend from the realm of particularity to the subjective universality of thought. In his thought he reflects upon the limitations of all of those determinate objects of his consciousness, including the laws and

institutions of his society. In so far as they are determinate they are limited, and in so far as they are limited his reflection includes options for their alteration. Thus, in the sixth entry Hegel explains that the will must determine itself in the actions of the individual. And in the seventh entry he concludes that freedom is the reciprocity of these two moments. On the one hand, it is the abstraction from particularity in the subjective universality of the will, and, on the other hand, it is the will's determination in particular acts. And in accord with RU and SC, freedom is the ability to find the universal in the particular: "Freedom is to will something determinate, yet in this determinacy to be by oneself and to revert once more to the universal."¹⁴⁴

Freedom, in other words, is a process, and it is a process of self-conscious, rational, self-determination. It is the same process that has been identified previously with the Idea, reason and subjectivity. "Subjectivity", as Hegel says, "is the ground wherein the concept of freedom is realized."¹⁴⁵ Subjectivity is the basis for freedom, first, in the sense that freedom is a process involving that form which has been identified with subjectivity. But secondly, subjectivity is the ground of freedom in that it is inseparable from subjective universality and the individual liberty that it entails.

The substance of the spirit is freedom. From this, we can infer that its end

in the historical process is the freedom of the subject to follow its own conscience and morality, and to pursue and implement its own universal ends; it also implies that the subject has infinite value and that it must become conscious of its supremacy. The end of the world spirit is realised in substance through freedom of each individual.¹⁴⁶

The individual is implicitly free in the laws of the state, and this freedom is actualized in so far as he expresses his own subjective universality in determining those laws. To the extent that he has genuinely participated in their development he may look upon those laws as an expression of his will and a reflection of his own inherent rationality. Hence Hegel writes:

This essential being, the unity of the subjective will and the universal, is the ethical whole, and its concrete manifestation is the state. The state is the reality within which the individual has and enjoys his freedom . . .¹⁴⁷

As a process of self-conscious rational self-determination, freedom involves the continuous identification and transcendence of limitations through the joint development of the individual and the state. Freedom requires that the individual activities should receive the sort of content and context that they acquire from the state; it requires that the individual should be particularized in relation to the state's substantive universality. But reciprocally, freedom also requires that the laws of the state should be particularized in relation to the universality of subjective thought, and altered by way of the individual will. Hence, the realization of political freedom requires the discovery and development of subjective universality. In Hegel's words, "Political freedom, freedom within the state, commences when the individual feels himself to be an individual, when the subject knows himself to be such in his universality, or when the consciousness of personality – the consciousness of having an inherently infinite worth – comes to the fore."¹⁴⁸

Freedom is the reciprocal universality of the individual and the state and the process of historical development in which it results. Thus we can see why Hegel uses the terms self-consciousness, subjectivity, spirit, reason, freedom, the state, the concept and the Idea to describe the same process of ontological development as it is expressed in various contexts of human experience and intellectual investigation. In every case it is a process deriving from self-containment and impelled by the concomitant principle of reciprocal universality. A useful statement of the interrelations among these closely connected terms makes the following passage worthy of extended consideration. It is especially worth noting that Hegel regards universality and particularity as implicit within each other and considers the state as the unity of these two.

We have then distinguished two separate moments: the Idea of freedom as the absolute and ultimate end, and the means by which it is realised, the subjective aspect of knowledge and volition with all its life movement and activity. We have recognised that the state is the totality of ethical life and the realisation of freedom, and hence the objective unity of the two moments in question. For although the two aspects may be distinguished for the purposes of discussion, we must not forget that they are intimately connected, and that this connection is implicit in each of them even if they are considered in isolation. On the one hand, we have recognised that the Idea in its determinate form is equivalent to freedom which knows and wills its own existence and whose sole end is itself: and it is also the simple concept of reason and what we have described as the subject, or

self-consciousness, or the spirit in its worldly existence. If, on the other hand, we consider subjectivity itself, we find that subjective knowledge and volition are the same thing as thought. But if I know and will something as a thinking being, the object of my will is the universal substance of reason which exists in and for itself. It is therefore evident that the objective aspect, i.e. the concept, and the subjective aspect, are implicitly united. The objective existence of this union is the state, which is accordingly the basis and focus of the other concrete aspects of national life . . . of art, justice, ethics, religion, and science. The sole end of all spiritual activity is to attain consciousness of this union, and hence of freedom.¹⁴⁹

– HISTORY AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS –

For Hegel, the union of substantive and subjective universality is the foundation of freedom, and the goal of all spiritual activity, including art, religion, philosophy, science and politics. Thus, freedom acquires ontological significance and constitutes “the absolute end and aim of the world”.¹⁵⁰ Freedom follows from the self-containment of the Idea as expressed through the development of the universe, and reflected in the laws of science no less than those of the state. Hence, the individual’s self-conscious comprehension of his relation to the state, and the realization of his freedom within it, provides him with a basis for understanding his relation to the cosmos. As the social order has always provided a model for cosmological speculations, the Hegelian state is a microcosm that demonstrates the role of subjectivity in structuring the encompassing totality.

It is primarily in the state that the individual comes to understand the significance of his subjective freedom and self-determination in relation to an encompassing whole. Through his political activities he comes to understand himself at once as a particular that is determined by the universal, and as a universal that actively determines the particular. It is through his experience with this RU relationship that he is able to understand the substantive nature of that self-containment which is also the principle of his own self-consciousness, and to recognize that self-containment as the basis for that temporal progression which he finds expressed in the history of the state no less than his own conscious development. Because the development of the state expresses an ontological structure, public life joins religion and philosophy as an indispensable feature of self-consciousness. The concluding sentence of PR calls attention to the crucial role of the state in the development of the latter:

In the state, self-consciousness finds in an organic development the actuality of its substantive knowing and willing; in religion, it finds the feeling and the representation of this its own truth as an ideal essentiality; while in philosophic science, it finds the free comprehension and knowledge of this truth as one and the same in its mutually complementary manifestations, i.e. in the state, in nature, and in the ideal world.¹⁵¹

A philosophic science (*Wissenschaft*) is that which grasps the underlying truth expressed in complementary forms in politics, philosophy and the natural world; or it is that science which comprehends the totality of which these are necessary components. It is the science which finds the whole expressed in each of these parts and therein grasps their unity. Hegel explains that science displays the “form of the Self” or the structure of self-containment, and that it is nothing other than the development of self-consciousness.¹⁵² Science, in other words, is the advanced form of self-consciousness that has arrived at a recognition of both the substantive and subjective significance of self-containment, and since self-containment unfolds itself through a necessary process of development science is self-consciously historical. In accord with Hegel’s metaphilosophy, it therefore recognizes itself as the history of its own development, comprehending itself as the development of thought from the self-containment of the Idea. “It is shown”, as Hegel remarks, “from what has been said regarding the formal nature of the Idea that only a history of Philosophy thus regarded as a system of development in Idea, is entitled to the name of Science . . .”¹⁵³

Hegel’s philosophy of history, like his history of philosophy, traces the evolution of culture as the self-realization of consciousness. “History” and “philosophy” are, for Hegel, more or less interchangeable terms because their significance is ultimately the same. Both describe processes in which consciousness develops through increasingly sophisticated models of itself until it finally arrives at a model of itself as the process of modelling itself. Chapter 1 concluded that this is exactly the way that Hegel understood his own philosophy. He understood his philosophy to have grasped the structure of self-consciousness by which both history and philosophy advance; and because he understood himself to have grasped the method by which self-consciousness develops from one paradigm to the next, his system self-consciously incorporates the preceding history of philosophy and anticipates those subsequent intellectual advances that would occur in the course of the same development.

Self-consciousness is at once the content, the form and the goal of world history. Subjectivity develops toward a recognition of its universality within its particularity, and a knowledge of itself as continuously evolving from out of that self-containment. In its particularity it is the ordinary individual subject who experiences himself to be influenced and determined by the world about him. Yet it is at the same time the universe as a whole conceived as a process of historical development.

From the standpoint of OM, history is the history of self-consciousness. It is the history of the cosmos, which evolves as a consequence of its self-containment until it produces self-conscious beings, which evolve until they produce culture, which evolves until it produces a model of itself as the process of producing models of itself. It could be said that the universe determines and models itself until it eventually produces self-conscious beings, who, through their cultural and political activities, create and reflect upon a model of the whole.

Absolute spirit is self-consciousness producing and reflecting upon itself. It includes art, religion and philosophy as the activities through which this self-reflection occurs. These activities acquire an ontological significance because human culture follows from human self-consciousness, as self-consciousness follows from the necessary self-containment of the universe. It is through these cultural activities that consciousness produces increasingly sophisticated determinations, or models, of itself.

But why should self-consciousness be the goal of world history; why should it progress toward a knowledge of its self-containment? Since the universe is necessarily self-contained it develops necessarily toward a consciousness of itself. This is because it continuously determines itself in relation to its higher level self, and overcomes the limitations of each consecutive determination. In the course of this process, the universe moves through progressively advanced determinations of itself toward a determination of itself as the process of determining itself.

The latter determination is the necessary goal of this process since the process involves a transcendence of the limitations inherent in any determination, such that all other determinations are eventually overcome. The determination of itself as the process of determining itself is the only determination that is not limited because it is a self-limiting determination. Because its self is the process of undergoing these limitations, its self is not limited so much as expressed throughout

the course of this process; and in so far as it is self-consciously self-limiting, the transcendence of any of its particular determinations is not a transcendence of itself. Rather in so far as it recognizes itself as the process of its own limitation, it proceeds and endures and extends itself by means of its continuous self-determination. From a formal standpoint, this capacity follows from the self-negating feature of those abnormal classes upon which OM is founded. Since they are fundamentally self-negating, their self-negation is not self-cancellation so much as self-realization and self-development. Thus, because the self-determination of the universe as the process of determining itself is the only determination that will not be transcended through the course of its self-determination, it is the only determination that endures the process and is therefore the necessary goal of the process in the sense that all other determinations will be transcended.

To say that the universe determines itself as the process of its own self-determination is to say that it recognizes itself in the individual's reflection upon the structure of his own self-consciousness. The element of self-reference running throughout Hegelian philosophy reappears in this self-consciousness of self-consciousness, or self-containment of self-containment. It is what Hegel describes in the *Phenomenology* as "absolute knowing". By "absolute knowing" Hegel means a knowledge of the absolute as the process of knowing, or as the form of the self, or as the development of self-consciousness. It is a recognition of the absolute as the unity of form and content that follows from its own self-containment. In his words:

This last shape of Spirit - the Spirit which at the same time *gives its complete and true content the form of the Self and thereby realises its Concept as remaining in its Concept in this realisation* - this is absolute knowing; it is Spirit that knows itself in the shape of Spirit . . . or it is in its existence in the form of self-knowledge . . . But this identity is now a fact, in that the content has received the shape of the Self . . . Spirit *manifesting or appearing* in consciousness in this element, or what is the same thing, produced in it by consciousness, is Science.¹⁵⁴

The "shape of the self" is the pattern, or structure, of self-containment, or the "form of self-knowledge", the consciousness whose content is itself, and remains within itself in its realization. It recognizes itself as simultaneously occupying both higher and lower dialectical levels, and as consequently undergoing a process of development. At all preceding stages in its development it has been

conscious of itself in some particular form at the lower level, but when it arrives at a consciousness of its self-containment, or self-consciousness of its self-consciousness, then it recognizes itself as an occupant of consecutive levels of consciousness. So long as it only understands itself as occupying the lower level, its self-determination is inadequate to its higher level indeterminacy. Its particular determination is, in other words, inadequate to its universality. Hence, its lower level determination is negated in its transition to a higher level. But when it becomes conscious of itself as the self-containment of the universe (as the Idea) then it is no longer inadequate to its higher level self since it now conceives itself as the structure of its own self-containment and the self-negating, self-limiting, self-determining process that it generates.

But as regards the *existence* of this Concept, Science does not appear in Time and in the actual world before Spirit has attained to this consciousness about itself. As Spirit that knows what it is, it does not exist before, and nowhere at all, till after the completion of its work of compelling its imperfect “shape” to procure for its consciousness the “shape” of its essence, and in this way to equate its *self-consciousness* with its *consciousness*.¹⁵⁵

Hegel calls science the “last shape of Spirit”, but this does not mean that absolute knowing marks the end of the Hegelian dialectic any more than does the absolute Idea when it appears at the end of his *Logic*, or absolute Spirit at the end of the *Encyclopedia*. Such misconceptions on the part of many of Hegel’s interpreters from Marx onward have led to innumerable difficulties in theory and practice alike. These interpretations have failed to understand that science is the final form of spirit because it is the subject’s consciousness of itself as process of its self-determination. Once this self-consciousness has been achieved, it will not be negated by any further self-conception because it includes all further self-conceptions. It is the subject’s conception of itself as the process of moving from one self-conception to the next.

Chapter 2 showed that Hegel describes the absolute Idea as the structure of universal self-containment and the “method” through which its own dialectic development proceeds. Hence, the reader’s arrival at the absolute Idea in the last section of the *Logic* does not signify an end of the dialectic, but, on the contrary, a self-conscious comprehension of the necessity and the method through which its development continues. The book can conclude at that point because

the method of the dialectic has been grasped, but a comprehension of the method ensures that its development proceeds. Hegel explains that the same method will be applied thereafter to an understanding of natural and spiritual (including psychological, social, economic, political, artistic, religious and philosophical) development. Hence, the end of the *Logic* is “the beginning of another sphere of science”,¹⁵⁶ in which “the Idea freely releases itself in absolute self-security and self-repose”.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, the last paragraph of the *Encyclopedia* makes it plain that the dialectic continues eternally: “The eternal Idea, in full fruition of its essence, eternally sets itself to work, engenders and enjoys itself as absolute mind.”¹⁵⁸

Far from being an end to that process, science is therefore the recognition of its necessary continuation. It is the subject’s comprehension of the structure of its own consciousness and its recognition that this structure follows from the self-containment of the universe.

Though his approach is both universalist and foundational, Hegel is not intoning just another meta-narrative, and in any case this is not the purpose of OM. To be sure, the present interpretation of the Hegelian system displays meta-narrative features in so far as it describes the development of the Idea, or the universe as a whole, from which it derives ethical and political conclusions. But it differs from the meta-narrative format in so far as it is a description of the development of meta-narratives themselves throughout an historical process requiring the transition from one meta-narrative to another. This is to say that it is not a traditional meta-narrative in so far as it is a description of the historical and conceptual processes by which all meta-narratives rise and fall.

On the other hand, if OM is a meta-meta-narrative, then it may be conceived as the class of all meta-narratives so long as “class” is understood as the rule for the determination of its members. It is the set of principles underlying the process through which philosophical meta-narratives are sequentially developed and undermined, a process that requires periods of relativism and scepticism (for example, Sophism, post-modernism, etc.) no less than periods of metaphysical ferment. But, if OM is considered as a meta-narrative account of all meta-narratives, then in so far as it is both a meta-narrative and the class of all meta-narratives, it once again may be modelled as a class that contains itself as a member. It becomes the abnormal class of all meta-narratives, and the method by which meta-narratives are produced.

Ethical activities acquire ontological significance because political

participation provides an important insight into the role of subjectivity in the cosmos. By reflecting upon our activity in the state we develop self-consciousness with regard to our role in the universe as a whole because political activity allows an individual to participate on either side of an RU relationship between individuals and an encompassing totality. In other words, the citizen may participate both in creating and in criticizing universal laws. Through this process he gains insight into the role of subjectivity in the development of the encompassing totality, whether this is considered in a political or a cosmological context.

From time immemorial people have attempted to conceive of the cosmos on the model of their political communities. Hegel's innovation is his conception of cosmos and community in terms of that temporal development which follows from self-containment. Through the historical confrontation with their own limitations, such communities will evolve toward the self-conscious inclusion of subjective universality. When individuals finally arrive at a self-conscious conception of their community as the historical process of their own development, driven by the RU of substantive and subjective universality, then that community will also provide an adequate model of the universe. It will do so because that community has developed in accord with the same method of self-consciousness and subjective universality that also serves to structure cosmological development.

The Milesians modelled the cosmos on the laws of their political community. Yet their model failed to incorporate the subjective universality that did the modelling for the same reason that it was excluded from an active role in their community. The polis disintegrated because it could not incorporate subjective freedom, but that dissolution was the beginning of a development that has culminated in a reintegrated conception of consciousness, community and cosmos on the model of that very self-consciousness which was previously neglected.

Whereas Plato sought to restore the unity of cosmos and community by restricting individualism; whereas Jesus offered a reunion of the individual and the absolute that largely ignored the community; and whereas modern political theory has sought to integrate the individual in the community at the expense of the encompassing cosmological order, OM affords an integration of all three elements, and therefore may provide a basis for resolving that cultural fragmentation that has proliferated since the time of the polis.¹⁵⁹

This conception of a cosmic order derived from Hegel's paradigm of self-consciousness provides a basis for the recovery of an organic *Sittlichkeit* at a new and higher level. This higher level universality is that of the rational state which encompasses the substantive universality of the polis along with the subjective freedom that was excluded by the traditional life of Greece, and which could be introduced only at the cost of its fragmentation. In doing so, it provides a basis for a contemporary reunion of consciousness, community and cosmos.

– NOTES –

1. Pelczynski, in *Hegel's Political Writings*, p. 136. A somewhat stronger statement of this view was presented by Anthony Quinton in his survey of Hegel literature for *The New York Review of Books* (1975, p. 42): "Hegel's metaphysics is composed of all the dross in Kant, carefully purged of all his insight . . . [Readers should] confine themselves to Hegel as a theorist of society and culture." Also see Pelczynski, "The Hegelian conception of the state" and "Hegel's political philosophy", in Pelczynski, (ed.), *Hegel's Political Philosophy*; Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, ix; Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, p. 311; Cooper, "Hegel's theory of punishment", in Pelczynski; the lecture by Irving Fetscher and the ensuing discussion in R. Heede and J. Ritter (eds), *Hegel-Bilanz: Zur Aktualität und Inaktualität der Philosophie Hegels*, pp. 193–230; Plamenatz, "History as the realisation of freedom", in Pelczynski; Sabine, G., *A History of Political Theory*, p. 637; Tunick, *Hegel's Political Philosophy*; Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*.
2. See Brod, *Hegel's Philosophy of Politics*; Pinkard and Englehardt, *Hegel Reconsidered*; Houlgate, *Freedom, Truth and History*; Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity*; Pinkard, *Hegel's Dialectic*; Plant, *Hegel: An Introduction*; Rosen, G. W. F. Hegel.
3. Rosen, S., G. W. F. Hegel, p. xiii.
4. Tunick, M., *Hegel's Political Philosophy*, p. 4.
5. Wood, A., *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, p. 6.
6. Ilting, K-H, "The dialectic of civil society", in Pelczynski, *The State and Civil Society*, p. 211.
7. See Habermas, *Theory and Practice*; Reidel, *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft und Staat bei Hegel*; Reidel, *Materialien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie*; Reidel, *Between Tradition and Revolution*; Ritter, *Hegel: Essays on the Philosophy of Right and the French Revolution*; Ritter, *Metaphysik und Politik: Studien zu Aristoteles und Hegel*.
8. Ilting, K.-H., "The dialectic of civil society", pp. 211–12.
9. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, §1.
10. Ibid. §31.
11. Ibid. §32.
12. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 54–5.
13. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, pp. 467–9.
14. Plamenatz, J., *Man in Society*, vol. 2, p. 263.
15. Hegel, *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System*, p. 91.
16. Ibid., p. 89.

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17. Hegel, “Die Einleitung nach den Vorlesungen Hegel’s von 1823 bis 1827–28”, in *Einleitung in Die Geschichte der Philosophie* (ed.) Hoffmeister, p. 151.
 18. Hegel, *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System*, p. 92.
 19. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 104.
 20. Schiller, *Briefe über die Aesthetische Erziehung der Menschen*, in *Nationalausgabe*, vol. 20, p. 323.
 21. Herder, *Vom erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele*, *Sämtliche Werke* (ed.) Suphan, Berlin 1877–1913, vol. 8., p. 217.
 22. Schiller, *Briefe über die Aesthetische Erziehung der Menschen*, in *Nationalausgabe*, vol. 20, p. 326.
 23. Hölderlin, F., “Erste Hyperion-Vorrede”, *Sämtliche Werke, Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. 2, p. 545.
 24. Hegel, *Jenenser Realphilosophie II* (ed.) Hoffmeister, p. 251. Also see Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 250–6.
 25. Hegel, *Encyclopedia (Philosophy of Mind)*, §556 60.
 26. *Ibid.* §561.
 27. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 264–5.
 28. Nohl, *Hegel’s Theologische Jugendschriften*, p. 342. Hegel, “The spirit of Christianity and its fate”, in *Early Theological Writings*, p. 301.
 29. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §787–8.
 30. Hegel, *Logic*, §24 Add.
 31. Steuart, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, vol. 1, p. 28.
 32. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 74.
 33. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §379.
 34. *Ibid.* §377.
 35. See *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, pp. 126, 131.
 36. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §379.
 37. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 33.
 38. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §378.
 39. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §343.
 40. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §377.
 41. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §4.
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. *Ibid.* §5; see *The Philosophy of History*, p. 144; and *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 252; and Smith, *Hegel’s Critique of Liberalism*, p. 117.
 44. *Ibid.* §5.
 45. *Ibid.* §6.
 46. *Ibid.* §7.
 47. *Ibid.*
 48. *Ibid.* §30.
 49. *Ibid.* §35.
 50. *Ibid.* §36.
 51. *Ibid.*
 52. *Ibid.* §35.
 53. *Ibid.* §40–6.
 54. *Ibid.* §46.
 55. *Ibid.* §105.
 56. *Ibid.* §108.

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57. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 91.
 58. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §138.
 59. Ibid.
 60. Ibid. §138 Add.
 61. Ibid. §141.
 62. Ibid.
 63. Ibid.
 64. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §508.
 65. Ibid.
 66. Ibid. §511.
 67. Ibid.
 68. Lukács, G., *The Young Hegel*, p. 163.
 69. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §141 Add.
 70. Ibid. §144.
 71. Ibid. §141 Add.
 72. Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 376.
 73. Ibid., pp. 382–4.
 74. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §514.
 75. Ibid. §515.
 76. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 214.
 77. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §154.
 78. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §527.
 79. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §183.
 80. Ibid. §182.
 81. Ibid. §199.
 82. Ibid. §183.
 83. Ibid. §184.
 84. Ibid.
 85. Ibid. Add.
 86. Ibid.
 87. Ibid. §251.
 88. Ibid. §201.
 89. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §529.
 90. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §249.
 91. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 101.
 92. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §261; see (*Encyclopedia*) *Philosophy of Mind*, §486.
 93. Ibid. §270 Add.
 94. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 95.
 95. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §269 Add; see §269.
 96. Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism: Rights in Context*, p. 153.
 97. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §271.
 98. Ibid. §272 (emphasis added).
 99. See Chapter 1, “Child of its time”. It should be recalled that whereas each part implicitly contains the whole, it does not provide an adequate explicit expression of that whole.
 100. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §270 Add.
 101. Ibid. §269.
 102. Ibid. §270 Add.

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103. Ibid. §260.
 104. Ibid. §316.
 105. Ibid. §316 Add.
 106. Ibid. §260 Add.
 107. Ibid. §260.
 108. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §535.
 109. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §274.
 110. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §538.
 111. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, pp. 119–20.
 112. Hegel, *Encyclopedia (Philosophy of Mind)*, §536.
 113. Ibid. §537.
 114. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, pp. 81–2.
 115. Ibid., p. 82 (emphasis added).
 116. Ibid.
 117. Ibid.
 118. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, §343.
 119. Ibid. §340.
 120. Ibid. §341.
 121. See Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 10; *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 209.
 122. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.
 123. Ibid. §185.
 124. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 214.
 125. Ibid., p. 89.
 126. Ibid., p. 90 (original emphasis).
 127. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §184 Add.
 128. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 94.
 129. Ibid., p. 73.
 130. Ibid., p. 81.
 131. Hegel, *Logic*, §32.
 132. Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, p. 225.
 133. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §72.
 134. Ibid.
 135. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Introduction, p. 94.
 136. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.
 137. Hegel's critics from the Frankfurt School forward have regarded National Socialism as a rejoinder to Hegel's rationalist philosophy of history, for if history is the development of reason and freedom, then how would Hegel account for the appearance of something so barbarous as the Nazi state. Yet we may find in the failure of National Socialism a dialectical necessity that Hegel would have appreciated. For in 1939 the state of science and technology was such that whoever first succeeded in exploiting atomic energy would win the Second World War. Six years earlier Germany and Central Europe had been the home of many of those physicists who, after fleeing to the USA to avoid the Nazis, played a central role in the development of the atomic bomb. Nazi ideology deprived itself of the support that it required for success.
 138. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 10.
 139. Ibid., p. 12.

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140. Ibid. §145.
141. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 52.
142. Ibid., p. 53.
143. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §256.
144. Ibid. §7 Add.
145. Ibid. §151.
146. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 55.
147. Ibid., p. 93.
148. See Hinchman, *Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment*, p. 2.
149. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, p. 104.
150. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §129.
151. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §360.
152. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 1, p. 31.
153. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 31.
154. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §798 (emphasis added).
155. Ibid. §800.
156. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2, p. 485.
157. Ibid., p. 486.
158. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §577.
159. See Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 388.

Community and Self

After Hegel, the form of this book is intended to reflect its content by exploring a hermeneutic reciprocity between Hegel's philosophy and twentieth-century intellectual developments. Thus the reinterpretation of Hegel's metaphilosophy in Chapter 1 was applied to a reinterpretation of contemporary mathematical logic in order to derive a model of self-containment that was subsequently applied to a reinterpretation of Hegel's history of philosophy, philosophy of history and political philosophy. The structure of the book thereby serves as an illustration of the same reciprocal universality that it finds at the core of Hegel's philosophy. Yet just as Hegel recognized the eternity of the historical dialectic (which, contrary to many interpretations, culminates neither in triumph of Prussian philosophy nor the collapse of the Berlin Wall), and just as he required that the history of philosophy must be continuously renewed through its application by each succeeding generation, so his political philosophy cannot be properly appreciated without its application to problems in contemporary political theory. Unfortunately, the scope of the present project will permit only a single brief excursion into contemporary theoretical issues. I have selected the initial dialogue between John Rawls and Michael Sandel because it successfully recasts the traditional dichotomy of substantive and subjective universality in a manner that is as accessible to common presuppositions as it is to an application of OM.

From the standpoint of OM, the traditional dichotomy of individualism/collectivism, recently revived in the debate of liberals and communitarians, appears as a series of one-sided abstractions from a unitary whole, at once sustaining and stemming from a fragmented intellectual tradition, and supporting what Gutmann has described as a "tyranny of dualisms".¹ Hegel was able to transcend the

dichotomies of the modern tradition because he saw the limitations in each of its opposing sides, and recognized its polarities as products of a fragmented theoretical outlook, whose application had resulted, and could only result, in the proliferation of cultural fragmentation.²

For Hegel, rationality is not only an attribute of calculating individuals, but of those laws and institutions that provide a framework for their activities. It is not merely an economic instrument but an ontological method and a cultural end in itself, the fruit of an ethical development expressed through an active and organic communal membership. Yet Hegel also defines that community in terms of its capacity for subjective freedom and presents it as an ethical foundation for moral autonomy and competitive individualism. And while he rejects social atomism and upholds a modern version of political organicism, he nevertheless praises the historical achievements of liberalism and criticizes the collectivist tradition for its inattention to the role of pluralism and the requirements of subjective freedom.³

The Hegelian approach begins by rejecting modernist claims, such as Ackerman's, that "there is no moral meaning hidden in the bowels of the universe".⁴ Hegel understands the state as an ethical expression of a deeper ontological structure, which implies values that are respectively supported by the liberal and the collectivist traditions. On the one hand, the architectonics of self-conscious subjectivity in Hegelian ontology leads to the centrality of subjective freedom and moral autonomy in his political philosophy. Hence, he accepts the Kantian conception of individuals as ethical ends in themselves, and assigns an historical role to subjective judgements and satisfactions. Yet this same historical outlook is compatible with his incorporation of collectivist values through which the individual is situated within a communal framework.

On the other hand, Rawls attempts to develop a deontological position without recourse to Kant's transcendental metaphysic. He seeks to preserve the priority of right while providing the noumenal self with an empirical orientation. "To develop a viable Kantian conception of justice", he contends, "the force and content of Kant's doctrine must be detached from its background in transcendental idealism" and rearranged to suit "the canons of a reasonable empiricism".⁵

Rawls begins *A Theory of Justice* by defending the priority of right and explaining why justice has a significance beyond other social virtues. Justice is not merely a value to be weighed and assessed along with other competing values, but is rather the activity in which values

themselves are evaluated. It is not a conception of the good so much as the process of balancing and reconciling conflicting conceptions of the good. Thus, justice is not a value so much as a meta-value. It is a higher level value which must be conceived as prior to other social values in so far as it determines the value of those values, or prescribes how the value of those values is determined.

As in the case of Kant, Rawls' assertion is at once ethical and epistemological. Justice acquires a meta-ethical status by means of its epistemological priority. As the basis, or capacity, for judgement, justice must be distinguished from the objects of judgement. Hence, Rawls' conception of justice requires his location of an "Archimedean point" from which the fundamental structure of society may be assessed. "We need a conception that enables us to envision our objective from afar",⁶ writes Rawls, but from a distance somewhat less than transcendental.

Despite his rejection of a metaphysical foundation, Rawls none the less sustains the Kantian connection between the priority of the right and the priority of the self: "For the self is prior to the ends which are affirmed by it; even a dominant end must be chosen from among numerous possibilities."⁷ As justice requires a standpoint for the evaluation of particular social goods, so subjectivity presupposes a viewpoint apart from its particular objects and aspirations. Hence, the Rawlsian self retains its universality in so far as it determines its particular goals and orders them in relation to one another.

But how is the priority of the self to be established without a transcendental metaphysic? Rawls' solution to this dilemma is to situate the self not within a particular conception of the good but within a hypothetical circumstance of neutral choice that he describes as the "original position" (OP). The ordinary empirical self is artificially universalized in so far as it is supposed to be (somehow) ignorant of its (subsequent?) social position. It is much like the myth of Er in the tenth book of Plato's *Republic*, except that instead of glimpsing the form of the Good, the participants are expected to grasp the good of the form. Yet, however ironically, the original position is an attempt to avoid such metaphysical anecdotes by way of a speculative exercise that involves the abstraction of the particular self from those very circumstances that make it particular. Rawls insists that this is justified as a tactical evasion of transcendental obscurities.⁸ By the final passage of the book, however, the terms of this justification have changed subtly but significantly. Following those same German idealists from whom he originally fled, Rawls returns

from ethical deontology to the epistemology of self-consciousness, and as Sandel⁹ observes, it is the language of self-consciousness in which OP is ultimately described. Rawls contends that

Once we grasp this conception, we can at any time look at the social world from the required point of view . . . Thus to see our place in society from the perspective of this position is to see it *sub specie aeternitatis*: it is to regard the human situation not only from all social but also from all temporal points of view. The perspective of eternity is not a perspective from a certain place beyond the world, nor the point of view of a transcendent being; rather it is a certain form of thought and feeling that rational persons can adopt within the world.¹⁰

Still, the Rawlsian self is expected somehow to dispense with spatiotemporal location without succumbing to the conceptual temptations of a transcendent being. It is required to retain its empirical familiarity despite its amnesiac abstraction from its particular determination. And it is supposed to make informed social decisions on the basis of a universal rationality that somehow dispenses with the informative rigours of a particular social experience.

The difficulty with OP is that Rawls wants to retain the empirical accessibility of the self, while at the same time abstracting that self from all particular determinations. Faced with the obscurity of Kant's transcendental subject, he seeks to transpose the universality of the latter to the empirical self, and postulates a particular subject without a particular situation, who is expected to attain a universal outlook. In view of such difficulties there is an irony in Sandel's conclusion that, "Rawls' project is to preserve Kant's moral and political teaching by replacing Germanic obscurities with a domesticated metaphysic more congenial to the Anglo-American temper. This is the role of the original position."¹¹

In light of these difficulties, OM may provide a useful approach to the issues. In so far as it develops a model of subjectivity from the logical properties of self-reference, OM avoids the Rawlsian substitution of one set of obscurities for another, while achieving a result similar to that which Rawls intends. It describes the relationship of subjective universality to the empirical self, and thereby coincides with Rawls' desire to locate "the perspective of eternity . . . within the world".

The subjective universality described in Chapter 2 would appear to suit Rawls' purposes in so far as it (1) avoids traditional metaphysical

obscurity by means of its set theoretic presentation; and (2) is conceived as determined in the form of particular empirical individuals. This subjective universality resembles an individual in OP in so far as it is unsituated, but it goes somewhat further than the Rawlsian individual in that it does not depend on a pretence, a pretence which remains inadequate in so far as our judgement inevitably presupposes our experience and our experience is invariably particular and situated. Whereas OP is, at best, a hypothetical abstraction involving individuals which will subsequently (?) find themselves situated in particular lives, the subjective universality of OM is understood as being actually already differentiated at a lower level among the particular situations of a multitude of individuals. Through the conceptual distinction of its higher level indeterminacy from its lower level determination, it avoids the difficulties that Rawls encounters in attempting to abstract empirical individuals from all empirical determinations, while yet retaining the elements of deontological subjectivity that are most important to his theory. OM presents a theory of the self that appears to satisfy Rawls' deontological ambitions without the device of OP and its confusion of empirical individuals with the requirements of subjective universality, or, in other words, without its confusion of dialectical levels.

Thus, OM's introduction of an undifferentiated higher level universality may provide the sort of "Archimedean point" that Rawls requires for his theory of justice. Since it is differentiated from its objects in terms of distinct dialectical levels, it may satisfy what Rawls described as the "need [for] a conception that enables us to envision our objective from afar", but not too far, since these distinct dialectical levels are understood as components of the same consciousness. Through its differentiation among dialectical levels the subjective capacity for judgement thus receives its requisite separation from the objects that it judges without transcendental imprecision.

Rawls needs a conception of subjective universality such as that with which Chapter 2 was concerned. But he lacks a conception of self-containment and dialectical levels that would allow him to attribute subjective universality to empirical individuals while yet distinguishing between their subjective universality at one level and their particular determination at another. Hence, he attempts to separate the particular from particular determination so as to invest it with universality, and in this confusion of universality and particularity he falls inadvertently into contradiction.

Following an Hegelian approach, the preceding discussion has

shown that the contradiction of the logical antinomies can be dialectically productive. Yet, as Russell concluded, the confusion of levels is the basis of antinomy; it leads to inconsistency. Through the preceding model of self-consciousness in terms of self-containment, Russell's logical argument was translated into an epistemological framework, which in turn may be applied to the epistemological foundation of Rawls' argument. Since the latter appears to involve a confusion of levels, OM would predict that Rawls's conception of the self in the original position would lead him into contradiction.

Sandel has argued that Rawls falls victim to just such contradictions, and an analysis of his argument in terms of OM will help to elucidate the controversy surrounding Rawls. Essentially, Sandel argues that the concept of justice is meaningless apart from particular conditions, and that Rawls therefore must import particularity into OP while also attempting to dispense with it. Thus Rawls must hedge his efforts to abstract OP participants from particular determinations, involving social position, etc. Rawls in fact concedes that "The fundamental principles of justice, quite properly depend upon the natural facts about men in society . . . Moreover the various elements of the original position presuppose many things about the circumstances of human life."¹² This leads Sandel to suggest that "an empiricist understanding of the original position seems deeply at odds with deontological claims" for "if justice depends for its virtue on certain empirical preconditions, it is unclear how its priority could unconditionally be affirmed".¹³ On the one hand, Rawls insists that OP "abstracts from the personal differences between rational beings, and also from the content of their private ends", while on the other hand he must import a "thin theory" of "primary goods" which he attributes to all rational beings.¹⁴

Sandel concludes that "it would appear that the two aspirations of Rawls' theory, to avoid both the contingency of existing desires and the alleged arbitrariness and obscurity of the transcendent, are uncombinable after all, the Archimedean point wiped out in a litany of contradictions."¹⁵ From these contradictions, Sandel undertakes an immanent critique of Rawls through which he intends to develop his own communitarian position.¹⁶ Whereas Rawls assumes the nature of the moral subject in order to derive a theory of justice, Sandel asserts that the principles of justice may be used to deduce the nature of the self: "What then must be true of a subject for whom justice is the first virtue?"¹⁷ Sandel's answer begins with the observa-

tion that justice would be meaningless without a multiplicity of persons. What, then, of unity?

While it is true that the principle of unity has an important place in justice as fairness . . . it is a mistake to accord it an equal priority with plurality; it is not essential to our nature in the same way. This is because any account of the unity of human subjectivity must *presuppose* its plurality, in a way that is not true of the reverse.¹⁸

OM enables us to see where Sandel has gone wrong. In Chapter 2 the plurality of subjectivity was derived from the undifferentiated unity of the universe as a whole by means of SC and RU. Sandel presupposes a plurality of subjects without consideration of alternatives, such as an Hegelian derivation of multiplicity from unity. He thereby commits the same error that lies at the foundation of Rawls' argument. He assumes the obscurity and ultimate inconsequence of subjective universality and foundational ontology, and consequently presupposes particularity and multiplicity. Thus, Sandel's critique of Rawls, which he intends as a development of his own communitarianism, is dependent upon the same *a priori* individualism that he subsequently attacks in liberal theory.

*That we are distinct persons, characterised by separate systems of ends, is a necessary presupposition of a being capable of justice. What in particular our ends consist in, and whether they happen to coincide or overlap with the ends of others, is an empirical question that cannot be known in advance. This is the sense – epistemological rather than psychological – in which the plurality of subjects is given prior to their unity. We are distinct individuals first, and then (circumstances permitting) we form relationships and engage in co-operative arrangements with others.*¹⁹

A similar deficiency appears in Sandel's assertion that "the deontological self, being wholly without character, is incapable of self-knowledge in any morally serious sense. Where the self is unencumbered and essentially dispossessed, no person is left for self-reflection and to reflect upon."²⁰ Sandel's misunderstanding of the structure of subjectivity leads him to suggest that Rawls' notion of the "unencumbered self" is inconsistent with our "deepest self-understanding". If the self is prior to its ends, he says, then introspection should penetrate our particular ends to a view of the unencumbered self. Sandel recognizes only the lower level determination of the conscious self, where we do indeed perceive our selves as

encumbered with objective limitations and “thick with particular traits”.²¹ While Rawls maintains, in Sandel’s words, that to “identify any characteristics as *my* aims, ambitions, desires, and so on, is always to imply some subject ‘me’ standing behind them, at a certain distance”,²² Sandel insists that our self-perceptions always involve particular purposes which therefore must be fundamental to the self.

Here Sandel simply fails to distinguish that which does the reflecting from that which is reflected upon. When I reflect upon my self as a lower level particular, I find myself laden with determinate characteristics. However, this in no way undermines the indeterminate, “unencumbered” universality of the higher level, from which I reflect upon the particular situation of my lower level self. In so far as the deontological self is compatible with subjective universality at the higher level as it reflects upon the particularity of its lower level determinations, it is absurd to suggest that it is “incapable of self-knowledge in any morally serious sense”, for it is indeed the very basis of self-knowledge and self-reflection.

In terms of OM, all particular purposes, motivations, goals and ends occupy a lower level in relation to the higher level subjective universality that evaluates and selects among them. When Sandel expects that this higher level universality might be somehow perceived, as if it were a determinately particular object, he repeats Rawls’ error of confounding dialectical levels and failing to distinguish the universal from the particular.

Similar considerations apply to Sandel’s contention that values are not chosen so much as interpreted by the individual within a collective framework. Whereas liberals would have the individual choose the life he wishes to lead and the person he wants to become, Sandel views the issue as a situation of self-discovery. The individual’s ends are not identified “by choosing that which is already given (this would be unintelligible) but by reflecting on itself and inquiring into its constituent nature, discerning its laws and imperatives, and acknowledging its purposes as its own”.²³ This is crucial to the foundation of those communal bonds that serve to unite individuals. A common goal is “not a relationship they choose . . . but an attachment they discover, not merely an attribute but a constituent of their identity”.²⁴

Once again Sandel’s argument involves a confusion of levels, and a failure to distinguish between the universality and the particularity of the self. When considered at the lower level the self is determined and, as described in Chapter 2, it is determined by other subjects.

These other subjects constitute a totality which, in appropriate contexts, may be regarded as a community. As the self reflects upon its lower level determinations, there is, to be sure, an element of self-discovery involved. Nevertheless Sandel ignores the fact that if there were nothing more to the self than those determinate characteristics that it discovers, then there would be nothing to do this discovering. Sandel's account implies, but fails to recognize, the higher level self which does this reflecting upon its lower level determinations, and which is therefore free to evaluate and select among them, rejecting some, perhaps, while cultivating others.

On this analysis, Sandel's critique of Rawls is undermined by the same flaw that ultimately is responsible for Rawls' difficulties. Like Rawls, Sandel fails to distinguish the higher level universality of the subject from its lower level particularity. Yet whereas this leads to Rawls' alchemical attempt to separate the particular subject from his particular determinations, while transmuting his empirical perspective to one of universality, Sandel depends upon an equally mysterious separation between a self-discerning and self-determining subject. In the final analysis, neither provides a clear reconciliation of substantive and subjective forms of universality; yet both perform a valuable service in so far as they focus on this problem in terms of the modern conception of the self.

Sandel's critique of Rawls is best when he is following Hegel's critique of Kant. Neither Kant nor Rawls can explain how a self abstracted from particular conditions can generate determinate moral content which it does not surreptitiously import. However, Sandel's concept of the self is at least as one-sided as Rawls' and mires him in a complementary set of difficulties shared by other communitarian writers.

Thus whereas communitarians make much of historical traditions, the implications of their views have often been remarkably ahistorical. This is because they have often overlooked the significance of moral autonomy and individual judgement in the modification and development of social practices, as a definitive feature of any historical tradition. Hence, they sometimes appear to import the concept of an historical tradition while ignoring the basis of its historical dynamism. And in so far as the communitarian position generally has neglected the significance of individual input in the ongoing development of an historical tradition, it turns out to be remarkably apolitical.

In order to address such difficulties, communitarians seem to require not only a richer concept of the self, but also a general theory

of community, such as that developed in the preceding chapter. Yet they may be prohibited from such a theory by their own rejection of universalist approaches, and their focus on particular cultures. Were this the case, then it would appear that communitarianism might perish upon a cross of its own construction, another victim of self-contradiction, and ultimately perhaps another source of social fragmentation.

Communitarians are correct in stressing the significance of collective values and goals for the development of political legitimacy, along with collective responsibilities for the propagation of such values and goals, but they overlook the historical obligations of the individual for the criticism and modification of the same. This results in what Gellner has described as “re-endorsement theories”, offering uncritical acclaim for any way of life that happens to exist.²⁵ On the view of OM, that by which cultures more appropriately are judged are the rational principles of subjective universality.

In so far as it is conceived as occupying the highest level, subjective universality is unencumbered, indeterminate and self-determining in accord with liberal theoretical requirements. Hence, it is free to select among potential values and ways of life. Yet OM also accommodates communitarian requirements in so far as the lower level individual is determined and situated in relation to the substantive universality. In accord with RU the same subjective universality that evaluates and determines conventions, laws and institutions (*à la* Rawls) is also determined by those values, laws and institutions that constitute an ongoing community, such that substantive and subjective forms of universality participate in one another’s development throughout an historical tradition.

Thus, OM would support the liberal view in so far as it regards justice as the process or activity of evaluating lower level values and objectives. Yet it would also suggest that a narrowly proceduralist conception of justice runs the risk of fostering fragmentation in so far as it honours subjective universality at the expense of its substantive counterpart. From the standpoint of OM, “justice” can only describe the RU relationship between the individual and the collectivity whereby values, objectives and policies are continuously proposed, applied and modified throughout an historical process. Thus justice joins the preceding interpretations of freedom, reason, subjectivity, self-consciousness and the state as expressions, in various contexts, of a deeper ontological structure, a structure wherein each of these terms is regarded as a process of historical development that relies

upon the interconnection of substantive and subjective freedom, and allows for the individual's criticism and alteration of those laws and institutions existing at any given stage in this process. It is a conception of justice in terms of Hegel's conception of freedom that returns to Hegel's own identification of the freedom implicit within Plato's conception of justice as the organic life and development of a community. Or again, it is a meta-proceduralist conception of justice that allows for the collective advocacy of common values and goals so long as these may be criticized and altered in accord with the requirements of subjective freedom. Thus, its meta-procedure is that of RU which adjudicates between the complementary claims of substantive and subjective universality throughout an historical process that provides for their common development.

Hence, the community may appropriately advocate certain common purposes and values, so long as it allows a continuing role for subjective universality in the criticism and modification of both this normative content and the procedural parameters within which it is framed. In other words, the collectivity is conceived as a substantive universality, which may advance certain values and goals which serve to determine the particular activities of individuals. But it may do so appropriately, only in so far as the collectivity itself is particularized in relation to the subjective universality of individuals through the criticism and modifications that they impose. This capacity depends upon the attainment of individual self-consciousness with respect to the historical process, such that no particular set of laws and institutions is regarded as sacrosanct, and such that the long-term advancement of individual and collective interests is identified with this unitary process of historical development.

Whereas political legitimacy may accrue to some particular set of laws and institutions, the inherent limitations of the latter eventually will be recognized. Hence, political legitimacy will falter unless it also derives from the historical process of political transformation through which these laws and institutions are further developed. Thus, in contrast with the communitarian position, an application of OM suggests that the legitimation crisis of contemporary liberal democracies results not only from a lack of common values but also from a failure on the part of political self-consciousness (as expressed in political culture as much as in contemporary political theory) fully to comprehend the requirements of subjective universality, as realized through the RU of individual and collectivity. If the political institutions and practices of contemporary states seem to lack political

legitimacy, then it is often at least partly because they are insufficiently rational and democratic to satisfy the requirements of subjective universality. This is to say that they are perceived by inhabitants of those societies as subject to limitations and inadequacies that give them the appearance of particularity (such that they are experienced as irrational, inconsistent, unjust, obsolete, parochial, etc.) in relation to those universal principles and ideals that motivate moral subjectivity and often are espoused by liberal democratic collectivities themselves. Thus the British monarchy has been subject to growing scrutiny; while at the same time the legitimacy of the US Congress and Presidency have suffered because they have frequently forsaken universal principles (associated with justice, freedom, democracy, self-determination, etc.) in favour of limited and particular objectives of either a political or a personal sort (for example, Vietnam, Watergate, Iran/Contra and the commonplace political prioritizing that places short-term electoral considerations ahead of long-range policy objectives).

While scandal and myopia have always been features of political life, the present view suggests that they are becoming increasingly incompatible with political legitimacy in so far as the historical development of political self-consciousness results in an increasingly self-confident and self-assertive subjective universality as expressed in the information media and echoed in the opinions of ordinary citizens. With the growth of political self-consciousness political legitimacy increasingly accrues not to any particular set of institutions, conventions and laws, but to the historical process through which those laws and institutions develop. Any particular set of laws and institutions will be perceived as legitimate in so far as it self-consciously facilitates, and otherwise keeps pace with, the process of its own transformation in accord with rational criteria and the requirements of subjective freedom. In other words, a government will acquire legitimacy in so far as it accommodates a continuing process of historical development. This is to suggest that the US Constitution, for example, retains its legitimacy in no small part because it allows several channels for the transformation of the political system, and that legitimacy of US political institutions has declined in so far as this transformation has been perceived as unduly slow and erratic.

This is not to overlook the traditional criteria of political legitimacy such as formal-legal foundations, the economic and political efficacy of government policy, etc. But it is to suggest that another criterion

will become increasingly significant through the course of historical development. Increasingly legitimacy will accrue to those governments that recognize their own role in that historical process, and thereby respect the reciprocal role of subjective universality with its reliance upon free flowing information and universal moral principles.

The dynamics of this historical process have evaded those generations of philosophers who contributed to it unselfconsciously, without fully comprehending it, and our misconception of Hegel may be measured by the extent to which the process remains inadequately understood by contemporary theorists. Just as the views of Sandel and Rawls may be considered as complementary abstractions from OM, so the difficulties in each of their positions may be regarded as but opposing sides of the same coin. Both assume the obscurity of foundational ontology and fall into a confusion of universality and particularity. And both sides pay a high price for this assumption, for each thereby forsakes a general conceptual framework for the analysis and presentation of its own theoretical focus. Whereas liberal individualists are thereby deprived of a general theory of the self, communitarians forsake a general theory of community.

On the other hand, a general theory of both the self and the community is implicit in OM. OM provides a clear, empirically compatible, ontological foundation for the subjective universality of the deontological position while also supporting communitarians in their insistence that the significance of social practices requires collective action within an historical context. When considered in terms of the reciprocal universality of the individual and the community neither the good nor the right has priority, for each has a part to play in the continuing modification of the other. All determinate conceptions of either the good or the right are understood as limited, and as therefore incorporated in an historical process involving their continuing transformation.

Adopting a meta-theoretical perspective it is possible to identify this historical process itself with both the good and the right. It is good in the sense in that it is understood as the source of all ethical significance and it is right in that it evinces both the universal principle (SC) and the universal form (RU) through which this significance finds expression in a series of historical manifestations. Moreover, if this historical process itself were thus conceived as ultimately good and right, then in so far as it includes all particular conceptions of the good and the right, it could be modelled as the

abnormal class of all conceptions of the good and the right. In accord with OM, it could then be considered as unfolding and determining itself in the form of all particular goods and rights throughout the historical process required by its self-containment.

For Hegel, politics is such an historical process, driven by the RU of individual and collectivity and ultimately implicit within the self-containment of the universe. It occurs because individuals are contained within those communities that they contain as objects of their consciousness, and are therefore determined in their actions and attitudes by that upon which they also may deliberate. The liberal/communitarian debate has focused attention on the two sides of this relationship while recognizing neither their dynamic reciprocity nor their underlying identity. Like much contemporary social theory, it is a debate that occurs within a conceptual framework founded on a long tradition of fragmentation, for which a reinterpreted Hegelian philosophy may afford a fertile resolution.

– NOTES –

1. Gutmann, A., "Communitarian critics of liberalism", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (14), 1985, 316–17.
2. Smith, S., *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, p. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
4. Ackerman, B., *Social Justice and the Liberal State*, p. 361.
5. Rawls, J., "The basic structure as subject", *American Philosophical Quarterly* (14) 165.
6. Rawls, J., *A Theory of Justice*, p. 22.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 560.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 256.
9. Sandel, M., *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 132.
10. Rawls, J., *A Theory of Justice*, p. 587.
11. Sandel, M., "The procedural republic and the unencumbered self", *Political Theory* (12), 1984, p. 85.
12. Rawls, J., *A Theory of Justice*, p. 159.
13. Sandel, M., *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 30.
14. Rawls, J., *A Theory of Justice*, p. 257.
15. Sandel, M., *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 40.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 94, 100.

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22. Sandel, M., "The procedural republic and the unencumbered self", p. 86;
Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 19.
 23. Sandel, M., *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 58.
 24. Ibid., p. 150.
 25. Gellner, E., *The Legitimation of Belief*, p. 20.

Self-containment and the Foundation of Set Theory

— I —

Whereas the collection V of everything is found to be contradictory when considered in light of Cantor's theorem concerning the domination of every set by its power set, it is possible to interpret this collection, not as a determinate entity with a well-defined membership, but rather as a generational process which produces both a hierarchy of types¹ and the axioms of set theory. Though this process derives from the notion V , understood intensionally as preceding the determination of its members, it does not derive from the object V , which extensionally presupposes their determination. And whereas this notion appears to be self-contradictory, the difficulty is resolved in so far as it is understood as giving rise to this progression.

Thus, for example, if V has n members, then by Cantor's proof it has some greater number p of subsets. But the subsets of V , like everything else, are among its members. Hence, if V has n members, then it also has p members. Since $p > n$, p includes n members plus other elements not included in n . Thus, the determination that cardinal $V = n$ implies that $V = p$, where n and p are natural numbers and $n < p$ (though, in general, n and p may be infinite cardinals). But if V is determined to have p members, then by Cantor's theorem it must have q members, where $p < q$. Then, if V has q members, it must have some greater number of members r , etc. Since each succeeding natural number (taken in the set theoretic sense of von Neumann) contains its predecessor, it may be regarded as a class that includes its predecessor as a member. And in so far as each class becomes a member at the succeeding level, this pattern of development may be understood to generate a hierarchy of types. According to this interpretation, each time set V turns out to have more members than it has, it is considered to have undergone a transition to a higher, and consequently more inclusive, typological level.

In other words, V is considered to be contradictory in the sense that it has some mutually exclusive attributes, associated with the cardinal of its

members. This contradiction, however, is understood to be resolved in so far as these attributes are expressed at different typological levels. Thus when a particular determination (that is, a total of n members) is found to imply another (that is, a total of p members), this is interpreted to signify a transition from a lower to a higher typological level. The result is a self-contradictory totality expressed throughout a hierarchy of types, such that attributes which would be mutually exclusive if considered as occurring at the same typological level are not contradictory when considered as occurring throughout a sequence of typological levels. In this way, the contradictory aspect of V may be understood as being resolved when its mutually exclusive elements appear, not simultaneously but in sequence, throughout the levels of a hierarchy.

The problem, in other words, is resolved when V is permitted to be contradictory in the sense that it is understood to have mutually exclusive attributes expressed throughout a series of determinations occurring at consecutive typological levels. The implication of one of these attributes by the other is subsequently interpreted to signify a transition from a lower to a higher typological level, such that a determination at any typological level implies the relation of that level to a higher level still. V is thereby conceived as the connection between the determinations of its membership at each consecutive level, and thus is considered as the process of generating this typological hierarchy.

Those difficulties traditionally associated with the antinomies may be eliminated when the highest typological level, or the class of the whole, is allowed to be contradictory in such a way that its conception as the highest level must always imply its membership in a higher level still. In other words, the contradiction of such a class is understood to resolve, or to spend, itself through its generation of a typological hierarchy wherein it determines itself as a succession of non-contradictory classes. Thus whereas the totality continuously violates the law of contradiction this violation may be interpreted as its sequential self-determination throughout a series of forms concordant with that law. In this way, any abnormal classes may be regarded not as a determinate entity but rather as a process for the generation of a typological hierarchy.

The laws and assumptions of standard logic may be applied to any of the elements organized within a typological hierarchy, so that they are generally applied with legitimacy to anything considered to be a part of a larger totality. Yet conceptions of absolute totalities, such as set V , defy the assumptions of standard logic in so far as they violate the law of contradiction. Nevertheless, the characteristic contradiction of such conceptions may be understood to signify, and necessitate, their expression throughout a sequence of mutually exclusive determinations, ordered within a hierarchy of types. Hence, set V may be conceived as a totality which continuously

determines itself in such a way as to generate that structure of relations within which the laws of standard logic apply.²

The generational process in which set V is understood to issue may be described as follows: At the beginning there is only the empty set. Then if at some ordinal stage α one has generated V_α then at the next stage $\alpha + 1$ one adds in all the subsets of V_α , so that $V_{\alpha+1} = V_\alpha \cup P(V_\alpha)$. At the limit stage λ one takes the union of all previous V_α 's, so that $V_\lambda = \bigcup_{\alpha < \lambda} V_\alpha$.³ If one continues this process up to K , the first strongly inaccessible ordinal, then it can be shown that V_K satisfies all the axioms of Zermelo–Frankel set theory. A concise proof of this fact has been provided by Drake.⁴ Thus, set theory, like the hierarchy of types, may be understood as being “naturally” generated from this antinomy.

– II –

Set V contains everything and therefore must contain itself. Thus, whereas the progression described in the preceding section begins with the empty set and possibly urelements, it derives from a class that contains itself as a member. Since a class which contains itself as a member is both a class and a member of that class, the fundamental categories of class and member may be conceived as initially undifferentiated within this condition of self-containment and as subsequently differentiated out of it in relation to one another.

This, of course, was not the way that I presented this development in the preceding section, where I initially supposed that V had n members, and thereby assumed the distinction of the categories of class and member in a more or less conventional manner. However, I am now suggesting that once this progression is understood it is possible to regard it not only as producing a hierarchy of types but also as producing the conceptual framework necessary for the differentiation of the categories of class and member. Whereas these categories are customarily presupposed, I am arguing that the present interpretation of Cantor's antinomy provides a basis for their derivation from a more primitive notion which may be regarded as prior to the proper distinction of these categories. In other words, I understand V as an entity indeterminate with regard to the categories of class and member, which (1) provides for the progression described in the preceding section; (2) leaves in its “wake” a series of levels that may be occupied by classes and members; (3) thereby provides the necessary framework for the differentiation of classes and members; and (4) consequently permits the distinction of the categories of class and member.

Once the categories of class and member have been distinguished, the typological hierarchy may be conceived as developing both upward and downward from any arbitrarily selected level in accord with the preceding description. That which is initially a class, when considered in relation to its lower level member, also implies a new and higher level class in relation to

which it acquires the status of membership. A similar progression may be conceived as occurring in the opposing direction from higher to lower typological levels. That which was initially determined as a member in relation to a higher level class, also may be conceived as a class in relation to a lower level still. In this way, a typological hierarchy may be conceived as developing both upward and downward from out of a self-containing class.

However, a certain irregularity arises when this progression is conceived as culminating in either a highest or a lowest typological level. The highest level in a hierarchy of types is occupied by proper classes, as, for example, the universal class (U). In so far as it is not a member, such a class is all inclusive; is not exclusive; and is consequently not distinguished from anything. Since it is neither distinguished from nor exclusive of anything, it cannot be conceived as having external determination of any sort. This is to say that it has no exterior, and cannot be conceived as a determinate whole, or in the words of Russell and Whitehead, it has "no total".⁵ This highest typological level must remain indeterminate in so far as no conception may be formed of it as a totality, without thereby constituting a new highest typological level, characterized by that same indeterminacy associated with its predecessor. In other words, this aspect of indeterminacy is a feature of the highest level, whatever it may be. It is possible to remove this indeterminacy through the formulation of some determinate conception of that level, but not without constituting a new highest level to which the same indeterminacy adheres.

A similar indeterminacy is associated with the interior of the lowest typological level. The 0-th level of a simple typological hierarchy is occupied by what Zermello called urelements (u). Since these individuals inhabit the lowest level, they are not conceived as being classes themselves, as are the elements at every other level. Consequently, they are not understood to be constituted by lower level elements, and are therefore indivisible and unanalyzable. They have no interior.

Just as U is exclusive of nothing, and is therefore indeterminate with respect to its exterior, so u is inclusive of nothing and is therefore indeterminate with respect to its interior. U can be understood, as it were, from the inside in terms of its members, but it cannot be comprehended externally, that is, as a totality or as a whole. On the other hand, u may be comprehended externally, as a whole, but it cannot be understood internally, for it has no members. Hence, the interior of the latter would seem to be no less ambiguous, indeterminate, infinite and logically problematic than the exterior of the former.

— III —

In his "Eigentliche Klassen als Urelemente in der Mengenlehre"⁶ Oberschelp has shown that set theory permits the identification of U with u.

Oberschelp provides a formal theory T in which there are sets and non-sets.⁷ However, the axioms of the theory do not distinguish between non-sets which are urelements and non-sets which are proper classes. Whether a non-set, x say, is to be considered as a urelement or as a proper class depends on the context in which x occurs: if the context refers only to members of x , then x is to be considered as a proper class; if the context refers only to things to which x belongs then x is to be considered an urelement. The phrase “to be considered as” occurs not in the axioms, but in the description of a model for T which shows that T is consistent. Contexts in which a non-set would have to be considered both as an urelement and as a proper class are excluded by the formalism of T . The following outline presents a slightly modified version of Oberschelp’s argument.

Let ZFU be the theory derived from Zermelo–Frankel set theory by extending it to allow for the existence of urelements (objects which are not sets). Most details of this theory (for example, axiom of foundation, axiom of choice) are not important. However, the axiom of extensionality reads: $\neg Ux \wedge \neg Uy \wedge \forall z (z \in x \leftrightarrow z \in y) \Rightarrow x = y$, where Ux stands for “ x is an urelement.” In ZF it is convenient to make use of abstracts $\{x: \Phi(x)\}$ for classes which may be proper (that is, not sets). But this is a *façon de parler* and not part of the formal theory. We shall suppose that some particular abstracts, in particular $V = \{x: x = x\}$ have been singled out as proper classes. Oberschelp allows *all* such abstracts which are not sets as proper classes.

Now we take a model (M, \in_M) in which the objects are urelements ($' \in U_M'$), sets ($' \in S_M'$), and proper classes ($' \in P_m'$). We suppose that there is a bijection F from U_M onto P_M (Oberschelp ensures this by taking a countable model for ZFU with countably many urelements). It is this F which effects the required identification. Of course F is not in the model, nor is it formally definable.

Now we introduce a theory T in which no distinction is made between urelements and proper classes. The language $L(T)$ of T has, besides \in and $=$, the predicate symbol \underline{S} . $\underline{S}x$ asserts that x is a set; $\neg \underline{S}x$ asserts that x is a non-set. The axiom of extensionality in T is simply $\forall z (z \in x \leftrightarrow z \in y) \Rightarrow x = y$. To give the other axioms we need some notation.

A variable (free or bound), x say, occurring in a formula Φ is *left-facing* (resp. *right-facing*) if in Φ it does not occur on the right (resp. left) of \in . If it occurs both on the right and the left of Φ it is *two-sided*. The formula Φ^* is derived from the formula Φ by a restriction of all two-sided variables to range only over sets. To simplify notation we introduce two types of variables: $\underline{x}, \underline{y}, \underline{z}, \dots$ unrestricted and $\underline{a}, \underline{b}, \underline{c}, \dots$ to range only over sets. Then Φ^* is obtained from Φ by restriction of all two-sided variables in Φ by letters from the list $\underline{a}, \underline{b}, \underline{c}, \dots$ and e.g. $(\exists \underline{a})\Psi$ stands for $\exists \underline{x}. \underline{S}x \wedge \Psi$ and if \underline{a} is free in an assertion Φ^* then $\Phi^*(\underline{a})$ stands for $\underline{S}x \Rightarrow \Phi(\underline{x})$.

Now the *set existence* axioms are obtained as follows. Let $\exists x \forall y (y \in x \leftrightarrow$

$\Psi(y))$ be a set existence axiom of ZFU. Then $\exists a [\forall y(y \in a \leftrightarrow \Psi(y))]^*$ is a set existence axiom of T. For example, the pair axiom is (the closure of)

Pr $\exists a . \forall y(y \in a \leftrightarrow y = z \vee y = w)$ (note that z and w may be non-sets; in ZFU they may be urelements). And the sum set axiom is

Sum $\exists a . \forall y[y \in a \leftrightarrow \exists b(y \in b \wedge b \in c)]$ (b is two-sided).

We assume that the sum axiom only asserts the existence of Yx when x is a set – not an urelement. Similarly the existence of $\text{Pow}(x)$ – the power set of x – is only asserted when x is a set, and in the replacement axiom the image of x under a (functional) relation $\Phi(u,b)$ is only asserted when x is a set.

We have also class existence axioms in T. These depend on which abstracts $\{x:\Phi\}$ have been singled out as defining proper classes. For such abstracts we have the axioms $\exists y[\forall x(x \in y \leftrightarrow \Phi(x))]^*$ so we have $\exists y \forall x x \in y$ since $\{x:x = x\}$ in a proper class. But suppose $\{x:x \notin x\}$ was one of our chosen abstracts. Then the existence axiom would be $\exists y \forall a(a \in y \leftrightarrow a \notin a)$ (since a is two-sided in $a \notin a$).

Now *Oberschelp's Theorem* is “ T is consistent”. This is not immediately obvious since (writing V for $\{x:x = x\}$) one might think that T would prove (the obviously contradictory) “ $\{V\}$ is a set”. But using the bijection F , there is in fact an urelement v (in M) st $Fv = V$, and $\{v\}$ is a set in M . This illustrates the proof of consistency.

We construct a model M^* for T using the model M as follows:

(1) the domain of M^* is $U_M \vee S_M$.

(2) Let Φ be my formula of $L(T)$, and let $\Phi^* = \Phi(\underline{x}_1, \dots, \underline{x}_r; \underline{a}_1 \dots \underline{a}_s)$ have $\underline{x}_1 \dots \underline{x}_r, \underline{a}_1 \dots \underline{a}_s$ as its free variables. (Strictly speaking we should, above, always have used underlined letters for formal variables.) Let $x_1 \dots x_r \in U_M \cup S_M$ and $a_1, \dots, a_s \in S_M$. We define $M^* \models (x_1 \dots x_r, a_1 \dots a_s)$ (M^* satisfies Φ at $x_1 \dots x_r, a_1 \dots a_s$) by induction on the construction of Φ as follows:

(1) $M^* \models \underline{S}a$

(2) $M^* \models \underline{S}x$ if $x \in S$

(3a) $M^* \models x \in a$ iff $x \in_M a$

(3b) $M^* \models a_1 \in a_2$ iff $a_1 \in_M a_2$

(3c) $M^* \models x_1 \in x_2$ iff either $x_2 \in S_M$ and $x_1 \in_m x_2$ or if $x_2 \in U_m$ and $x_1 \in_M Fx_2$, where F is the bijection from U_M onto P_M .

(3d) Similarly $M^* \models a \in x$ iff $x \in s$ and $a \in_M x$ or if $x \in U_M$ and $a \in_M Fx$.

Then \models is extended to non-atomic formulae in the usual ways, for example, $M^* \models \forall \underline{y}, \Phi^*(\underline{y}, x_1 \dots x_r, a_1 \dots a_s)$ iff for all $y \in U_M \cup S_M$ $M^* \models \Phi^*$ as just defined. This is to say that a right-facing variable which is not a set is treated as an urelement, while a left-facing variable which is not a set is treated as a proper class as identified (by F) with the urelement y .

To prove *Oberschelp's Theorem* one has to check that Ax is an axiom of T then $M^* \models Ax$. The way in which the axioms of T were defined makes this a

totally routine matter. For example, for the axiom of extensionality $\forall z(z \in x \leftrightarrow z \in y) \rightarrow x = y$ one observes (in M) that two sets are equal if they have the same members, that no set has the same members as a proper class, and that (since F is a bijection) if $x, y \in U_M$ then $x = y \leftrightarrow Fx = Fy$.

Remark: of course M^* does not make $x = Fx$. If it did it would satisfy $\exists x(\neg Sx \wedge \exists y, z(y \in x \wedge x \in z)) \Phi sa$. But Φ^* is $\exists a(\neg Sa \wedge \dots)$, which is false in M^* .

Oberschelp requires that the map F from urelements to proper classes be a bijection only in order to establish that the axiom of extensionality holds for non-sets as well as for sets. The other axioms of T hold in M^* even if F is many-one. In what follows we shall suppose that there is only one proper class V . This is a natural consequence of the ideas of ii. One may consider processes of generation arising from each other *stepwise*; but any thing (set) which is generated by one process will also be generated by another. (Similarly, cosmologists consider that there is only one actual universe for any particular observer.)

On the other hand, we allow that there may be many urelements. These are to be distinct from each other, but are indistinguishable in the sense that any property (that does not involve proper names) which holds for one urelement will hold for any other. Any urelement u is "identified" by F with the universe. Of course, the process of generation of sets does all the use of proper names: if u and u' are distinct so are the sets $\{u\}$, $\{u'\}$. The following section concludes with a set theoretic definition of the process of generation, requiring that the collection W of urelements is a set.

— IV —

Thus, Oberschelp has shown that set theory is consistent with the identification of entities occurring at the highest and lowest levels of the typological hierarchy. I wish to suggest that the identity of these opposing extremes of the typological hierarchy is the significance of that self-containment characteristic of the universal class from which the typological hierarchy is now interpreted as arising. In other words, the *indeterminacy* at the opposing extremes of this hierarchy may be conceived as containing itself in so far as the same indeterminacy associated, in one context, with the interior of each u is associated, in another context, with the exterior of U , or it is associated with that which ultimately contains every u . In this way, each u may be conceived, in different contexts, either as containing, or as contained within, all of the others.

The two extremes of the typological hierarchy thus may be treated as opposing views of an identical entity, that entity being nothing other than the universal class and the hierarchy of levels that it implies. In so far as U is determinate with respect to distinctions among the membership constituting

the levels of its interior, while being indeterminate with respect to its exterior, it will be conceived as a “view” of the typological hierarchy upward from below, or from the perspective of a member. On the other hand, in so far as an urelement u is determinate with respect to its exterior, but indeterminate with respect to its interior, it will be treated as a “view” of the outside of the typological hierarchy, downward from above, or from the perspective of a more inclusive class. On this interpretation, u is simply the exterior “view” of U as it appears when its self-contradiction drives it to become a member in a new and higher level class; while U is the interior “view” of u as it appears from the perspective of its lower level members. On the one hand, u is understood to be the way that U appears when it is conceived to be contained within that which it contains. On the other hand, U is considered as the way that u appears when it is conceived as containing that within which it is contained. In this way, U may be understood (in different contexts) to be contained within each of the u 's that it contains. It is not difficult to see that these two views of U correspond with left- and right-facing variables in Oberschelp's theorem. The upward view of U corresponds with left-facing variables, and the downward view of u corresponds with right-facing variables.

It is worth emphasizing that these complementary views are not of two separate entities (U, u), but of a single entity which is neither U nor u , or which, alternatively, is both at once. I shall describe this entity as an ultimate U , which I understand in accord with the preceding interpretation of a self-contained class as prior to the distinction of the categories of class and member. When U occurs only on the right (that is, left-facing) then it is to be interpreted as referring to U . When U occurs only on the left, then it can be considered as any of the u 's. This formulation depends upon Oberschelp's distinction between sets and non-sets: The axiom of extensionality does not hold for non-sets. $\forall xy[\forall z(z \in x \leftrightarrow z \in y). \Rightarrow x = y]$ is false for non-sets x and y . $\forall ab(\forall z(z \in a \leftrightarrow z \in b) \rightarrow a = b)$ is true in any case.

On the basis of the preceding interpretation, it is possible to consider sets as being generated from non-sets. The existence of sets is dependent upon a typological hierarchy, such as that which has been derived from notion of the proper class U . In preceding discussion the notion of U was interpreted in terms of U as combining, and preceding, the conventional categories of class and member, which could be differentiated only after the generation of a typological hierarchy from this notion. Since U now has been identified with u and U , the typological framework for sets may be understood as generated from out of non-sets; and as the typological hierarchy has been generated from out of non-sets, the latter may be understood as containing the typological hierarchy. Then, in so far as sets are structured within the typological hierarchy, and in so far as the latter is contained within non-sets, sets may be understood as contained within, and as generated from non-sets. U , in other words, may be regarded as the foundation for set theory. This

may be formalized by adding the construction of the V_α 's to Oberschelp's model as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} U_0 &= (\phi) \cup W \text{ where } W \text{ is the set of urelements} \\ U_{\alpha+1} &= P(V_\alpha) \cup W \\ U_\lambda &= \bigcup_{\alpha < \lambda} V_\alpha \\ U &= \bigcup_{\alpha} V_\alpha \end{aligned}$$

Note that this construction does not involve looking inside the proper classes thought of as urelements. Nevertheless, U can be considered as an urelement: $u \in U$.

– NOTES –

1. For purposes of this discussion it will not be necessary to consider a ramified theory of types.
2. Similarly, the semantic paradoxes can be conceived as giving rise to a hierarchy of languages, as examined by Tarski.
3. This notion of a cumulative hierarchy of sets is due to Zermello (1930) "*Über Grenzzahlen und Mengenderiche*", *Fund. Math.* (16) 19–27.
4. Drake, F. R. (1974), *Set Theory*, Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co., p. 109. Also see Mostowski, A. (1949), "An undecidable arithmetical statement", *Fundamenta Mathematica* (36), 143–64.
5. Russell, B. and Whitehead, A., *Principia Mathematica*, pp. 37–8.
6. *Mathematische Annalen* (157), 1964, pp. 234–69.
7. I am grateful to Dr. R. O. Gandy for his help in formulating and formalizing my ideas, and for his version of Oberschelp's work.

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